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THE

LAST OF THE PLANTAGENETS:

An Historical Romance,

ILLUSTRATING

88932

SOME OF THE PUBLIC EVENTS, AND DOMESTIC AND ECCLESIASTICAL MANNERS,

OF THE

FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

Alas! the Family's
Extinguish'd in him, and the good old Name
Only to be remember'd on a tomb stone!
A Name that has gone down from sire to son
So many generations!

SOUTHEY.

LONDON:

SMITH, ELDER, AND CO., CORNHILL.

1829.

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TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

GEORGE WILLIAM FINCH HATTON,

EARL OF WINCHILSEA AND NOTTINGHAM,

VISCOUNT MAIDSTONE,

&c. &c. &c.

AS A LINEAL DESCENDANT OF SIR THOMAS MOYLE,

THE LAST PROTECTOR

OF

THE LAST OF THE PLANTAGENETS,

AND POSSESSOR OF THE MANOR OF EASTWELL,

TO WHICH HE RETIRED,

THIS NARRATIVE

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

INTRODUCTION.

THE RETREAT OF A COUNTRY ANTIQUARY.

He took a journey, being accompanied by a countryman and companion of his own College, and both on foot; which was then either more in fashion, or their want of money or humility made it so.

IZAAK WALTON'S LIFE OF HOOKER.

He learned that these uncommonly scarce and precious volumes, belonged to an Ancient Gentleman, whose name was studiously concealed; but who was in the habit of coming once or twice a week,—to smoke his pipe and lounge over his books; sometimes making extracts from them, and sometimes making observations in the margin with a pencil.

DIBDIN'S BIBLIOMANIA.

IT was towards the close of one of those long and delicious summer days, which the pious George Herbert has exquisitely called "the bridal of the earth and sky," that two personages of clerical appearance, who seemed to have attained the middle period of life, presented themselves at the little Inn adjoining the village of Eastwell, in the fair County of Kent. A small leathern wallet buckled on the back of one, and the dusty habiliments of both, indicated them to be of that order of gentle-

men-travellers, or strollers, which,—because it sometimes includes both patricians and plebeians,—is expressed, in modern phraseology, by the epithet of pedestrian. In fact, they were two Graduates of a certain famous College on the banks of the Cam; who, rejoiced to escape from poring over antiquated authors in their own apartments, and listening day after day to the classical standing-jokes of the Combination-room, were profiting by the long-vacation to renew their acquaintance with modern life and nature, amidst the delightful scenery with which the above-named County is well known to abound.

The keen air of the downs, and their long ramble, had the usual effect upon the Pedestrians, of sharpening their appetites and elevating their spirits. With minds open to all the impressions of the beautiful country through which they were travelling, they had been occupied by an interchange of thoughts, tastes, and feelings; discussing, perhaps, some of the great political topics which at this time engaged the public attention; or, it may be, in accordance with their own ordinary habits, debating, in scholar-like terms, some abstruse and knotty subject, which had often bewildered the schoolmen of past ages. At length, when with exhausted lungs and parched throats they had settled these points to their mu-

tual satisfaction, they were hardly less pleased to find themselves close upon a long straggling tenement, before which, swinging from the branch of an old tree, and flapping in the wind, was suspended a sign, exhibiting the goodly portraiture of the First King George; who was then but recently elevated to maintain the Protestant ascendancy, and be at the same time the Patron-saint of all the best liquors of the nation.

The serenity of the evening had summoned into the open air all the male population of the place, and groups of the younger villagers were to be seen engaged in their sports on the common hard by; whilst, on benches at the Ale-house door, the rustic grey-beards were seated in solemn divan, arranging their own and their neighbours' concerns, with all the vehemence and hilarity inspired by a foaming tankard; the potency of which, in those good old times, was measured, rather by the liberality of mine host, than by the gauge of a cellar-inquisitor. All these were auspicious omens for the Hostel; for merry faces at the door of your Inn, are fully as attractive to weary way-farers, and not half so deceiving, as the ancient ivy-bush of your vintner, and his own protest touching the surpassing quality of his liquors. Within the precincts of Alma-Mater, the two Graduates would

probably have shrunken from the contamination of such a place of public resort;—but rambling, as they were, for health and pleasure in a remote district, with no observant eye watching them, they felt themselves free to follow their own fancies; and without hesitation approached the humble roof which offered them refreshment. The distance to the next town was so considerable, that it was scarcely a matter of choice which determined them to take up their abode here for the night, if they could meet with the requisite accommodation: and, their enquiries proving satisfactory, they were ushered into a clean sanded little parlour by the portly dame of the house, who, with civil welcome, received them and their orders, and prepared with alacrity to provide for their entertainment.

As they wished for somewhat more privacy than this room afforded, communicating, as it did, by a low bowed-window with the enclosed spot, whereon the peasants were assembled, they enquired of their Hostess whether they could not be indulged with a more retired apartment.

"Truly, my masters," replied she, "our house is but small, and not fit for gentlefolks, for the most of our customers be of our own neighbourhood; and they are content with our poor ac-

commodations. And indeed this is the only room we have for visitors, except the kitchen; which is quite full already."

"We are somewhat fatigued," said the elder of her two guests, "and are not so anxious about the accommodation, provided the place be quiet: have not you a room above stairs, now, where we may be free from the smoking and drinking of your friends close by this window?"

"Why as for their smoking and talking, good Sir," answered the Landlady, "it's bad enow to you, I dare say, and we shall have, I trow, rather a noisy time of it this evening:—for the weekly club will be held to-night, and it's expected to be a full meeting of the members, to settle their quarterly accounts;—but it's mortal unfortunate we should be thus straitened to lodge your honours."

The modern "Elinor Rumming" now looked earnestly at the gentlemen, and seeing nothing in their persons or manners displeasing, stated, though with some hesitation, that to be sure there *was* another apartment in her house; over which, through the absence of one who usually occupied it, she *had* a discretionary control. She then related to them, that for several years past, the Inn had been frequented by an elderly person who roamed about the country visiting ancient build-

ings and churches; and whose chief occupation appeared to be that of copying old monumental-inscriptions, and forming a general collection of whatever appeared to be antique and interesting. He was also in the habit of bringing home such of these rarities as he could honestly carry away, and of leaving them under her care;—till the old rubbish, as she termed it, had so accumulated, that it's removal would now be attended with considerable inconvenience to him. She had therefore appropriated the room above-mentioned to his sole use;—and, being a quiet inoffensive man, paying readily for all he wanted, he was evidently considered, notwithstanding his eccentricities, to be no unacceptable inmate. She stated him to be a prodigy of learning, and therefore concluded he had once been a schoolmaster; whilst his predilection for churches and burial-grounds was, in her womanish reason, to be attributed only to the loss of some beloved object in early life, which had given to his pursuits their melancholy character. She concluded by observing that, as her present visitors had the appearance of being clergymen, she ran no great risk in yielding up to them for the evening the use of "the Old Gentleman's Room;" professing herself satisfied that her confidence would not be abused, by the subtraction

or disturbance of any of the curiosities it contained; and she accordingly offered this improvement of their accommodation.

Her guests having thankfully accepted of it, the Landlady conducted them through her spacious kitchen; and, opening a small door directly communicating with a steep ladder-like staircase, she ascended to a long passage, terminating in the ANTIQUARY'S APARTMENT; into which having ushered her visitants, and silently enjoyed for a moment their expressions of surprise, she withdrew.

Upon examining the chamber, they found it to be a room of some twelve or fourteen feet square, having a low ceiling, and being indifferently constructed for receiving the light, by means of a very small latticed window; of which, however, nearly all the original panes had been exchanged for odd pieces of stained glass of numerous shapes and colours. In one place appeared a portion of some ancient armorial-bearing, and in another a jagged fragment of an old painted Cathedral-window, with the disjointed relique of a Saintly effigy, or scroll with a godly Latin text in black-letter:—some parts of these overlaid the others, or, in unskilful arrangement, were connected with heavy leaden frames, through which the rays of the sun

struggled in vain to penetrate. A round oaken table, which perchance had in by-gone times often groaned under the wooden trenchers of serving-men, and witnessed many a mighty operation of spoon, knife, and tankard, stood now oppressed with a tolerably heavy weight of another description of things; which the tooth of Time, although he is notoriously known as the insatiate *Edax Rerum*, had in vain attempted to consume. A small portion of the board was, however, cleared, and near it was placed a high-backed carved chair, which, in it's days of youth and cleanliness, might have been honoured by our Maiden Queen's noon-day *siestas*; or, as would rather be conjectured from it's present smoked and tarnished splendours, had once been fumigated by the fragrant vapours of Sir Walter Raleigh's Virginian narcotic. Here, then, as it appeared, the usual occupant of the room was wont to revel in his antiquarian treasures; and seated by his motley-coloured window, enjoyed it's "dim religious light," in poring over and decyphering many a fragment of the ancient lore of England.

A copy of that very rare and famous translation of the entire Scriptures, undauntedly set forth by Miles Coverdale at Zurich in 1530, which had escaped the prohibitions of Chancellor More and

the fires of Cheapside or Smithfield, wherein the spirits of the Reformers who translated it, had, "in fiery chariots," ascended to Heaven,—here lay enshrined in oaken boards, thickly studded with brass; designed as it were, like the well-nailed portal of some rich old mansion, to secure from profane hands the treasures which it contained. The religious feelings of the Collegians were, however, still farther gratified, by observing, as they turned over the leaves and read the pencilled remarks in the margins, that it's owner appeared to understand and appreciate it's value, more truly than the fashionable bibliomaniacs of later times are wont to do:—and that he loved and revered the doctrines which it taught, even beyond the extreme rarity of the edition itself. A small recess in the wainscot contained a few other choice black-letter tomes, of high value in the present day, pre-eminent wherein were the excellent old *Perambulation of Kent*, by the learned William Lambard, Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, *Editio Princeps*, by Caxton, and the *Chronicles* of Holinshed, edition of 1587, having all the cancelled passages; together with sundry fragments of books of devotion, old broadsides, ballads, and parchment deeds with large round seals attached to them;—but these were secured by an outer

door of lattice-work from the approach of all unprivileged curiosity.

A massive beam of carved oak stretched across the ceiling, from which was suspended a pair of boots of some old Cavalier, the solid weight of which was no doubt intended to keep him firm in his saddle against every round-head opponent; and ranged along the walls on the sides of the room, were to be seen battered pieces of mail, cuirasses, helmets, arrows, cross-bows, and rusty swords; which long surviving the gallant spirits who had borne them, were now placed upon a kind of peace-establishment to be terminated only by their own annihilation. There were likewise some weapons of a different kind, such as the amiable old Izaak Walton, the gentlest and most humane of all the "Brothers of the Angle," might have used when he took the water, and waged war upon the finny inhabitants of the silvery deeps. Pieces of broken images and marble sculptures, were also fixed along the sides of the chamber; and here and there might be found a little old box, containing coins, stones, and various other small curiosities, which some connoisseurs value far more highly, than did even the ages when they were best known, or when they were accepted as current money.

The Travellers were much amused with examin-

ing these antiquarian treasures; but that which principally arrested their attention, was a portfolio, in which were deposited drawings of various monuments and ecclesiastical reliques of the neighbouring country. It contained also several views of the adjoining Church of Eastwell, one of which, judging from the care displayed in it's execution, seemed to be highly valued by the possessor. It represented the tomb of a RICHARD PLANTAGENET, in Eastwell Church; by which the visitors were so much attracted, that they determined to see it before they left this part of the country.

They rose the next morning with recruited strength and spirits, but the old Antiquary had not returned, to give them the opportunity of cultivating his acquaintance: though they pictured to themselves the discovery of another Elias Ashmole or Tom Hearne, and would have been delighted to have carried to their College, some account of his learning and pursuits from their own personal observation.

Having determined on visiting Eastwell Church, they procured from the Hostess a little information concerning the adjacent country, and learned that about two miles from her Inn, some windmills would appear on the right, near which a lane would bring them on to a lea, and a second lane

upon the left, conduct them to Eastwell Park, the stately seat of the Earls of Winchilsea. The two friends, however, were less desirous of looking upon scenes of splendour, than of searching after wild and romantic solitudes; and the country lanes, which they speedily entered, grew by degrees as narrow and rugged as they could well desire. The last avenue wound abruptly down a hill, being enclosed on each side by tall hedges, which seemed to have been untouched by the hand of man for at least a century; from the top of which might be seen the trees of Eastwell Park, gilded by the morning sun, and rising above each other in graceful gradations; the whole being by the distance so harmonised to the eye, as to appear like a series of moss-covered hills. Towards the end of the lane, the ground again began to rise, and the Travellers passed through a natural arcade formed by the entwining branches of aged trees; the roots of which were stripped of their original covering, by time and the numerous footsteps continually going over them. Passing through the several flocks of sheep and herds of deer, which were peacefully feeding side by side upon the rich pasturage of Eastwell Park, a path leading to the right conducted them to a little knot of trees, concealing the lowly but venerable

Church ; the grey stone walls of which bore indubitable signs of having withstood the shock of many centuries.

The plain simplicity of one part of the building, and the elaborate skill exerted upon others, soon made the visitors desirous of seeing the interior ; and, in the words of Hervey, " the doors, like the Heaven to which they lead, stood invitingly open." The next moment they trod it's tiled floor, and looked upon the sculptured marble effigies designed to perpetuate the memory of the great of other days. Two of these, of considerable magnitude, rested side by side on a rich monument ; and near them, supporting part of the wooden chancel-screen, appeared the tomb of the Moyle family, for which Eastwell Palace was first erected. Opposite to them was raised the stone bust of Sir Heneage Finch, sometime Recorder of London, and ancestor of the Earls of Winchilsea and Nottingham, in the professional costume of his day, and the well-known pointed beard of the time of Charles I.

Against the wall in the chancel behind this effigy, appeared a small white-washed and unornamented recess, containing the monument of RICHARD PLANTAGENET, supposed to have been the last direct male descendant of his royal House,

and the natural son of the unfortunate Richard III. The tomb, though formed of stone, is now so dilapidated and decayed, that it might almost appear to have been once enclosed in something richer, and more substantial and appropriate to the remains of a descendant of royalty. The slab which covers it, was at one time inlaid with figures of metal, the forms of which are still to be imperfectly traced, one appearing to have been in the attitude of prayer; of the metal itself, however, only a very small portion is left.

But though this sepulchre has been despoiled of all notice of the trust consigned to it, the ancient Register of Eastwell Church long recorded that, in the year 1550, "Rychard Plantagenet was buryed the xxij daye of Desember;" in which ancient memorial, also, a peculiar mark is attached to the name of every person of noble blood, his being the first so distinguished, the character being also crossed by a straight line, which has been interpreted to express the heraldical bâton of bastardy. The only other reliques which the pilgrims to Eastwell found of this most interesting personage, were the ruins of a building in the park, said to have formed part of the house he erected, and a well near it, called "Plantagenet's Well;" after which researches they returned to their Inn, resumed their journey, and

for a while thought no more of the Antiquary or his favourite hero.

Several years passed away, before the two Divines were again led, either by their occupations or pleasure, to revisit this part of the country. But, however, as Time often makes up for his delays by suddenly bringing about the most unexpected coincidences, it oddly enough came to pass that one of the Travellers was at length preferred to the Rectory of the Parish of Eastwell, and with his friend came to take possession of his benefice. The same smiling aspect of country which they enjoyed together before, every-where invited them to a renewal of their acquaintance with it; but Time had been busy in his operations, and, either with a leaden foot for the wretched, or a swift, though noiseless, one for the gay, had overtaken many in the race of life, and gathered them unto the universal bourne.

The two friends had often since conversed together in their College-apartments, about the adventure of the evening which they passed at the little Inn; and, upon their return to the neighbourhood, it was almost their first object to visit the Landlady, and enquire after the Antiquary. But he, who had rescued so many reliques from Time, had at length bowed himself before the universal de-

stroyer. His old protectress, however, was still living, as bustling and good-humoured as before; and, in compensation for the few wrinkles which came over her brow as the legacy of years, the same finger of age which had stamped them there, had graced her complexion with a little of that jocund ruddiness, which is not at all unusual in the face of a Taverner: she was also still very talkative, and entertained them with many anecdotes of the eccentricities of her old inmate. His "ruling passion" had been "strong in death," and his last request was, that he might be buried near the Plantagenet-monument at Eastwell, in a coffin made of the shelves which had held his treasures; and that the service over his remains, should be read from his ancient black-letter Common Prayer and Bible, which he bequeathed for the purpose to the officiating Minister. His wishes on this point were punctually performed; and as many of the neighbours, who respected and loved him for his amiable qualities, were anxious at his decease to possess some memorial of the man, his collections were thus in a short time entirely dispersed.

The Landlady had however retained a box of his papers, which were sent to the Rectory for an evening's inspection; and the Reader will judge with what surprise they discovered in it an old

vellum manuscript, which, on opening, was found to be entitled

The Legende
of
RICHARD PLANTAGENET,
Written by hys owne hande.

The character of the volume was a fair small running-hand of the early part of the reign of Edward VI., to which period several circumstances in the narrative also referred it. The spelling was about as uncouth as that used by Leland, but the language was considerably less formal, and something like the florid style of the old English Chronicles, to which the Author might have been accustomed in his youth. Added to this, he seemed so evidently to have felt the scenes which he recorded, by his vivid and dramatic descriptions of them, that he appeared to live over again as he related his own story; and, as he says in the commencement of it, he gave to them a vivid portraiture, that posterity might regard his pages, as the true and lively similitude of the interesting matters which he had witnessed. Such is an account of the narrative now published, which appears to be thus eminently qualified for illustrating

the manners and events of the period to which it relates,—from 1485 to about 1549,—but it has been entirely revised in it's orthography, and occasionally modernised in style by the Editor; who has, however, preserved the original divisions of the narrative by marking them as chapters, and giving to them titles and mottos descriptive of their contents. He has also added a few Historical and Explanatory Notes, in the execution of all which, he has received considerable assistance from the kindness and experience of an antiquarian friend.

Independently of the very remarkable support which this volume gives to modern historical researches, the actual subject of it is still more curious and interesting; since it purports to be the original autobiography of an illustrious personage who has been neglected by the national Historians, and who is known to have lived only by tradition and the mysterious entry in the Register of Eastwell. It will be remembered that King Richard III. had one natural son named John of Gloucester, whom he made Captain of Calais, styling him in his Patent "our beloved bastard;" but it was not until the year 1720 supposed that he had also another son, Richard, who was brought up in obscurity, acknowledged by his royal father only the night before the battle of Bosworth-field, and

who survived until the reign of Edward VI., when he was upwards of eighty years of age. This interesting information was first communicated by Heneage Finch, fourth Earl of Winchilsea, to Dr. Brett, who sent it in a letter to Peck the Antiquary, by whom it was printed in his *Desiderata Curiosa*. It had, however, probably some traditional errors, of which this manuscript makes no mention; such as King Richard being decorated with a star and garter, though few persons can forget that Ashmole states, that the star was added to the Order by Charles I., nearly a century and a half afterwards. It may be remarked in passing, that it was from Dr. Brett's account, that Richard Hull the Actor composed his well-known legendary tale of Richard Plantagenet, in plaintive ballad-measure.

But not to keep the reader from the narrative itself with antiquarian discussions, it may be remarked, that the fortunes of Plantagenet being blighted on the death of his father, after many adventures, he finally became a builder, and was employed as such in the erection of Eastwell Palace, when he discovered himself to Sir Thomas Moyle; who, in 1546, gave him ground in his park to build himself the cottage in which he afterwards resided. Both the opening and conclusion of his story, state that it was written in this retreat, and he appears,

from the following pages, to have enjoyed that retirement with all the placid dignity of Milton's pensive man, who wished that he might in his

"——— weary age,
Find out some peaceful hermitage."

And when he speaks of the events of his past life, it is in a calm and happy strain, not unlike that uttered by one of the best and most exalted of our living Poets, with whose beautiful words this Introduction shall be terminated.

"It is pleasant then to sit and talk
Of days that are no more,
When in his own dear home
The traveller rests at last,
And tells how often in his wanderings
The thought of those far off
Hath made his eyes o'erflow
With no unmanly tears;
Delighted he recalls
Through what fair scenes his lingering feet have trod;
But ever, when he tells of perils past,
And troubles, now no more,
His eyes most sparkle, and a readier joy
Flows thankful from his heart."

THE LAST

OF THE

PLANTAGENETS.

CHAPTER I.

A LEAF FROM THE VOLUME OF CHILDHOOD.

The great increase of Religious Houses very much increased the number of Seminaries of learning, as there was a School more or less famous in every Convent.—Many persons of rank and fortune were educated in these Conventual Schools.

HENRY'S HISTORY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Well, by his visage, you might know
He was a stalworth Knight and keen,
And had in many a battle been;
* * * * *
His eyebrow dark, and eye of fire,
Shew'd spirit proud and prompt to ire;
Yet lines of thought upon his cheek,
Did deep design and counsel speak.

SCOTT'S MARMION.

FINDING myself, Our Lord be thanked, in most goodly estate and comfort, after many rude tempests overpast; gladdened by the fair resting-place now given to me on earth, and full merry in the hope of

Heaven,—I, RICHARD PLANTAGENET, would fain employ my latter days in recording the events of those which have long since passed away, into the great sea which Time is ever rapidly rolling onward to Eternity.

And this will I do, in the strength of God, without fear or favour, or unmeet inclining to either hand: So that they whose eyes shall look upon this narrative, when mine shall be closed for ever, may assuredly regard it as the true and lively similitude of those things belonging unto the story of my strange and troubled, though inglorious, life. For, since the next race may perchance desire to know what the past hath been, and seeing that old age loveth to discourse of it's youth-hood, I have, as it were, delineated the scenes wherein I have acted, in vivid portraiture, as they even yet remain impressed upon my memory; and have here set down the speech, the semblance, and the very habits, of those with whom I conversed, who "were honourable in their generations," but who now exist no longer. This, therefore, have I done to the extent of my poor skill, though, as one saith,

"I must write plain, colours I have none to paint;"*

but would I not, because I am now fallen into years, idly bask me in the warm sunshine which is to me

* Prologue to Cavendish's Poetical History of the Cardinal of York.

fast setting, but still assay what remaineth to me of wit and vigour, to "do that which my hand yet findeth to perform," and with all my little power, as 'monisheth the holy text; for, in truth I am now "going unto the dead, who have neither work, counsel, knowledge, nor wisdom." Nor do I forget, also, what that very learned Knight, Sir Thomas More,—albeit for divers reasons I like not his memory,—hath so wittily said on the importance of engaging us in such employment as we are best able to encounter, in those choice moral verses which he writ in his youth:—

"Wyse men alway
Affyrme and say
That best is for a man,
Dylygently
For to apply
The business that he can."

As to my story, sorrows have been mine, such as those of the common sort, with whom it was my lot often to sojourn, do rarely know; but to these bright hopes and joyous thoughts have at length succeeded. For I have found, that of a truth sadness and merriment do in this world evermore follow each other, as the day doth the night, himself anon to be pursued and eftsoons overtaken.

I was yet in my green years, nothing improving to-day, and nothing recollecting of yesterday, though ever vainly anxious about to-morrow, when I remember me being one of the Pupils who were in-

structed with the six Novices in the Monastery of St. Mary, in the Isle of Ely; what time that godly man, Roger Walkelyn of Westminster, was Prior thereof. It so chanced that my fellows went to their homes about the merry Feast of St. John, when the sun shines fiercest and fairest, the skies be brightest, the birds blithest, and the fields and flowers look the loveliest and greenest. Much did I repine at their going to their fond friends and tender parents whilst I was still left with Father Austin, the venerable and learned Master of the Novices, who still continued to instruct me in fair and beautiful writing, with enlumining of manuscripts; in the Grammar of Donatus, the Logic and Philosophy of Aristoteles, and the plain-song of our Church-service, with the art of playing it upon the deep-toned organ. As it is but all too likely, that in the strange convulsions of our later time this scene of my youth may full soon be despoiled and ruined, I cannot here omit to set down that the school of Ely Monastery was a fair wainscoted room, near the Treasury in the Western cloister; having an oaken stall, curiously carved, for our preceptor, and desks and forms stretching all across the room for his pupils. In divers other *carrés* or square pews, also, in the cloister, were chained sundry parchment books, fairly copied in our *Scriptorium*, or Writing-chamber, wherein the Novices and Students might read a good plain lesson of godliness, or of honest human wisdom: such being the divine Psalter, the Proverbia of Salo-

mon, the subtle histories and fables of the witty Æsopus, the *Promptuarium Parvulorum*, the *Moral Sayings of Cato*, *Le Chasticment d'un Pére*, and the like. Howbeit, unto my youth solitude was sadness: much did I miss my companions at the permitted hours of morning and evening disport, and much did I wonder why none should be left but myself; and then did I begin to enquire who or what were my parents, and to ask divers questions touching their estate and existence.

Still was I pursuing this course of life, when one day,—which I well remember me was the 13th of the Calends of September, which is to say St. Bernard's day, the 20th of August, in the Year of our Redemption 1485, soon after the hour of *Prime*, about seven in the morning;—it was then, I say, that Father Austin summoned me to attend the Lord Prior in the *Locutorium*, or Parlour; which was the more to be noted, as visitors were not lightly permitted to see the Students or Novices until after the procession at *Nones*, or about four in the afternoon. On entering I found him engaged in earnest conversation with a Stranger, who appeared from his habit to be a gallant soldier; for he was attired most bravely as it seemed unto me, poor wight, who had never beheld courtiers or men of war before. He was a tall and stout personage, of bold, but friendly features, embrowned by sun and storm, whose crisped and iron-grey hair curled closely about his forehead, contrary to the

general, though womanish custom of my younger days. The lower parts of his dress also seemed as though he scorned the fantastic habits of his age; since they were formed only of tight blue hose, having *genouillières,* or knee-pieces, of bright steel armour, partly gilt and ornamented with rich chasings. He wore, likewise, *sollerets,* or polished iron shoes, to which were affixed costly gilded spurs with large rowels, indicating him to be a Knight, fastened to his feet by blue leathers. I might well note also, that he did not wear the broad trunk-hose, nor the unwieldy stuffed and padded doublets which the ever-ready flattery of courtiers hath since brought into so great fashion ;*—but the rest of his raiment was almost entirely hidden by a blue surcoat, covered with golden studs, in front of which an embroidered belt sustained a ponderous sword and dagger in azure scabbards. His flat cap and feather of purple velvet and gold, he had doffed out of reverence to our Prior, with whose unadorned black Benedictine cowl and scapulary, the gallant habit of the Knight was strikingly contrasted. But albeit outward things wrought not greatly upon

* This passage alludes to the custom which prevailed when Henry VIII. began to increase in size, of the appearance of stoutness being adopted by almost all classes of the people; every part of the male dress being stuffed with bombast, or cotton-wool, to imitate the bulk of the Sovereign, especially in the shoulders and trunk-hose.

the mind of the venerable Roger Walkelyn, it seemed to me as if he held his guest in great honour; for though the day was yet so young, and it wanted full four hours of dinner, there stood upon the table beside him, a silver-gilded cup of Rochelle wine, a loaf of the Prior's own white wassell-bread, and a fair dish of stewed eels, for which the Monastery of Ely had long been famous.

As I entered the Parlour, habited in the coarse black frock and skin boots provided for the Students and Novices of our House, the Stranger attentively fixed his eyes upon me, and said "I trow, Lord Prior, that the object of my journey now stands before me: thanks to your hospitality and the good fish of the Ouse, I have well fed, drunk, and rested; but as you wot that time presses, if it so pleased you I would that he eftsoons made him ready to depart. And touching——" their conversation here sank into a whisper, and after continuing for a short space, I was ordered to put on my hood, and was consigned to the Knight, who willed me to attend him to the outer gate of the Monastery, where a stout Servitor, dressed in a blue livery and partly armed in bright iron, was waiting with horses for our conveyance. My conductor lightly vaulted upon one, with an agility which greatly excited my admiration, saying to his follower, "Take the stripling to you, Bernard:" upon which he seized me by the arm with the grasp of a giant, and swung me from the ground into the saddle

of a palfrey beside him, which he led by the bridle-rein.

It was almost high noon, and we had proceeded at a round pace upon our journey,—mine eyes having been long diverted by gazing on the country through which we passed, for my visits beyond the bounds of the Monastery had been full rare and very brief,—it was I say, nearly noon, ere I ventured to express any curiosity as to the end of our journey; but there was a moody silence about my guides which I vainly sought to remove. When I asked whither we were going, the Yeoman hastily pointed to a town with divers spires as of a Cathedral, at some distance, which he seemed anxious to reach. I trusted that our arrival there would clear up the mystery, but in this was I disappointed; for when we got thither, at the hour of *Sexts* or noon-prayers, we took a short, though substantial refection, during which the Knight never left me, and speedily afterwards we again set forward. As we were re-mounting our horses, I learned from divers peasants who were loitering about the hostel door, that the town we were then quitting was Peterborough, famous for it's ancient and stately Abbey dedicated to the Blessed Apostle. Whether it were the reverence in which I appeared to hold my knightly conductor, or the ready obedience which I paid to his commands, had won upon the sternness of the soldier, and had awakened the good-humour of the man, or whether he really compassionated my anx-

iety and alarm—I know not; but certain it was that after passing beyond the fore-named town, he caused me to ride near him and became more free of speech.

"Come, stripling," said he, "cheer thee up a short while longer, for our journey extendeth yet to Leicester, now nearly some forty miles farther; and then you shall have that rest and food, which a day's hard riding renders meet for such home-keeping youths as thou art."

"Thanks, Sir Knight," answered I, "but may I crave of you wherefore I am carried thither? until this day have I been ever dwelling in Ely Monastery, even from my childhood; and in our Lord Prior and the venerable Friar Austin, my preceptor, I have found the only semblance of father or kinsman it hath been my lot to know. Are then my own fond parents in Leicester? or do there dwell the kind relations, of whom until now I have been all unwitting? Say but aye, my honourable guide, and my overjoyed heart shall sustain my wearied limbs, and the fatigue which oppresseth them shall be recked no longer."

"A passing fair-spoken youth, as I'm a soldier," exclaimed the Knight to himself; and then added aloud, "say'st thou so, my boy, then by Our Lady of Walsingham, all your hopes shall full soon be gratified. Be it known to thee, then, youth, that thy father is one, miscalled as he may be, who hath ever loved thee, and—— Tush!" cried he suddenly, his voice faltering, and his whole frame appearing to

labour under some inward emotion or restraint, as he added "Ask me no farther, boy; but let us put forward to Leicester: anon thy desire may be satisfied to the full."

Yet whilst he was thus reluctant to communicate to me any information, touching that subject which of all others I most desired to know, my knightly guide was no longer unwilling to enter into ordinary discourse with me. He spake, soldier-like and wisely, upon the then troublous state of the realm of England; and told me how the royal Richard Plantagenet had marched from his Court at Nottingham Castle to the town of Leicester, with a full gallant army of some 12,000 men, to oppose the rebel, Harry Tudor,—so he named him,—Earl of Richmond, who had landed at Milford Haven on the 6th day of that same August, with 2000 soldiers, which he had been daily augmenting to assist in his most traitorous claim upon the crown. Notwithstanding the utter strangeness of these martial histories to my ears,—which had been accustomed to little more than prayers, anthems, and masses,—I listened to them with wondrous delight, and they seemed to stir within me like the swell of a trumpet, as with such like discourses my conductor beguiled the weariness of our journey.

was drawing towards the evening of the second day after we left Ely, that I perceived the slanting rays of the sun gilding the ancient spires of Leicester Abbey, and St. Mary's Church. It was the Festival

of Bishop Augustine, being the 21st day of August, and the twelfth Sunday after the Feast of the Holy Trinity; and even now, in the very winter of my life, the recollection of that most memorable evening is depicted upon my soul with more than the vivid freshness of yesterday. Unlike the holy silence or pious joy which that sacred season ever witnessed in the cloisters of Ely, all in Leicester town was noise, tumult, and confusion; from the mustering and marching of the King's army. Bodies of men-at-arms, bowmen, billmen, demi-lancers, and horse-archers, were being marched through the streets to the camp; and many an Esquire or *Coustillier*, was hastening thither bearing the arms or leading the war-horse of his knight: whilst the town resounded with the grinding of weapons, the twanging of bows, the burnishing of arms, and the continual clang of the hammers of smiths, armourers, and braziers, who were shoeing the steeds, or completing the harness of the knights and soldiers. Nor did there, in remote streets, want even the impious oath, the loud brawl, the full tankard, or the idle talk of the baser sort, collected into groups, and debating with great violence and small wisdom on the probable issue of the expected fight. Perplexed and wondering at the spirit-stirring scenes around me, I would fain have lingered on my way the better to have marked them, but my guide ever and anon hastened our progress. At length we stopped at a large house, with a broad overhanging storey,

and ornamented with fair timber-work, standing in the street leading to the North-Gate. Against it, carved upon a stone, was the figure of a White Boar; and, by a person in a blue habit, a red face, and a white apron, standing at the door seemingly watching our arrival, it appeared to be a hostel.

"So! fairly ridden," said my guide, reining in his horse and beckoning to the Host who assisted me to alight, "here, then, youth, ends your travel for the present. Look to this stripling, Jankin Stoup," added he to the Tavern-keeper, "give him food, and let him go to rest in the wainscot-chamber, until I return, which will be by the midnight bell."

Thus saying he rode away, and after a slight refection, the Host led me into a rich apartment of oak, quaintly carved, wherein was a large square bedstead with pillars, choicely sculptured and in some parts gilt, of a richer kind than I had ever then seen. Wearied with the journey I had undergone, and perplexed in mind as to the purport thereof, I hastily said over my night-prayers, and sinking down upon the couch was speedily lost in a heavy slumber.

CHAPTER II.

A SCENE NEAR BOSWORTH FIELD ON THE EVE OF BATTLE.

Wonder no more why thou art hither brought,
The secret of thy birth shall now be shewn;
With glorious ardour be thy bosom fraught,
For, know, thou art—IMPERIAL RICHARD'S SON!

* * * *

Begone, my son!—this one embrace!—away!
Some short reflections claims this awful night;
Ere from the East peep forth the glimmering day,
My knights attend to arm me for the fight.

HULL'S RICHARD PLANTAGENET.

THE fatigues which I had undergone had so exhausted my strength, that the deep sleep into which I had fallen continued unbroken, until I was awakened by the voice of my conductor at the side of my couch. "What, ho! youth," said he, shaking me, "I pr'ythee bestir thyself: for albeit I marvel not that thy weak limbs should want rest and thy young eyes be drowsy, yet thou must now up and tarry no longer; for the bell will soon tell midnight, and we must be gone." So saying he threw over me a rich dark-co-

loured *hucquè*, or mantle, used chiefly by knights and nobles at tournaments, wherein I was completely enwrapped; and briefly ordering me to follow him in silence, led me forth through the town, and again mounting fresh horses, we rode at a rapid pace toward the West into the country.

I soon perceived from the martial scenes around me, and the oft-repeated challenges of parties of soldiers,—to whom my guide made a low, and brief reply, which procured us leave to pass them,—that we approached near to that fatal plain which was full soon to become the field of battle. It appeared to me upon that most memorable night, and on the morrow, when I might still more duly note that which I shall now depict—as a spacious tract of open, uneven, and uncultivated, country, somewhat of a round, or oval, shape; being perchance of about two miles long, and one broad. From the red colour of the earth thereof, —too soon, alas! to be dyed with a deeper stain of sanguine by the blood of a Sovereign,—the field was called Redmoor Plain; and on the South-western side it was bounded by a rivulet called Tweed, which glided through a valley between the camps of the opposing armies, and supplied them both with water; thus recalling unto my mind Our Lord's words, that "God doth send his rain alike upon the just and on the unjust." Unto this streamlet, flowed the narrow marshy channel of a fair spring, which rose upon a mound named Aymon-hill on the East, and formed a

little square and obscure font, surrounded by dank mosses and mould: but yet I truly protest unto them that shall hereafter read my story, that to me, that small well is venerable as the Fountain of Jacob was to the men of Israel; since it was there that King Richard drank his last earthly draught, and gave unto it's friendly waters some sparkles of his own immortality. The rustic who now points out in that desolate field the spot of the last battle between the contending Houses of York and Lancaster, still calls it "King Richard's Well;" and many of the country hinds yet love to drink thereof, whilst they turn them away from the Tweed; which they declare hath unto this day a stain of the blood of the fallen running in it's streams.

When we arrived at this place, the last dim rays of the setting moon were cast upon the camps and mounds of the two armies: those of Harry Tudor being erected close to the Tweed, which he had lately crossed, and somewhat North-west of King Richard's well, at the foot of Aymon-hill. His tents of striped green and white; his broad banner, pitched beside his own pavilion, bearing a red fiery dragon, fairly wrought upon green and white sarcenet, to commemorate his vain boast of descent from Cadwallader, the last of the British Kings; and his soldiers clad in white coats and hoods, were all faintly visible through the pale moonlight, until they were at last obscured by the mist which came on so thickly on the morning

of the day of battle. As I have since learned, his bulwark encompassed some seven acres of the field, and his whole power, together with that led over to him by the treacherous Stanleys, who as yet seemed to adhere unto the King, hath been truly computed at full 15,000 men; albeit the unfaithful chroniclers of the victor would fain have it believed, that his triumph was wrought almost without an army. The camp and fortifications of King Richard, to which I was conducted, were fixed at Stapleton, some eleven miles from Leicester, and nearly two from the enemy, on certain rising grounds, called the Bradshaws; whence we might well behold the plain of Bosworth, and to which no adversary could approach unseen. The royal defences and camp spread over eighteen acres; and were formed of two lines, having a wondrous mound of earth, 300 yards long, cast up behind them.

Whilst I gazed on these things, and marvelled greatly as to why I was brought thither with such haste and contrivance, we entered the camp, and passed through the long lines of tents striped with the York liveries of crimson and blue, until we came to the Royal Pavilion, which stood in the centre, having upreared beside it the King's standard of azure and red sarcenet in quarters; bearing the fleurs-de-lys of France and the lions of England, richly wrought thereon in goldsmiths' work of beaten metal. The tent itself was of a large square form, with a sloping

roof, all being made of crimson and blue canvas, and surmounted by divers little gilded pensils, and the King's badges: such as the golden cross and crown, for the blessed St. Edward the Confessor; the red and ermine chapeau, with the golden lion of England; the lily of France; the golden grey-hound of Wales; the Irish harp; and the oak-branch for the Dukedoms of Gascoyne and Guyon. On the top in the midst were a stately imperial crown, and the King's peculiar badge of a silver boar, with tusks and bristles of gold. The liveries of the soldiers in this camp were also chiefly white, having the holy cross in red upon their breasts; though others were dressed in the colours belonging to their leaders; or in habits of coarse cloth strengthened with iron plates, or arming-doublets of iron and leather, with sleeves of chain-mail, and stout helmets and leathern hose also strengthened with iron. Their weapons were divers kinds of swords and bows, spears and lances, bills and sharp blades set upon staves; with iron and leaden maces, quarter-staves, and heavy flails, not less destructive, and of still greater power. But all this, I say, I beheld more perfectly upon the morrow.

As we approached the King's pavilion, the sentinels, upon receiving the word from my conductor, lowered their gisarmes and stood aside, that we might straightway pass into it; the Knight having been commanded of his Highness to attend him at that hour. On entering the tent we found the King already risen from his couch, and seated by a table on

which were scattered divers papers and parchments, a brazen penner and inkhorn, and letters of which the silk strings were uncut, and the seals were yet unbroken. A massive silver crucifix stood in the midst, and before it was a fair illuminated missal open at the Office of St. George, which the King had questionless been reciting for success in the coming conflict. The volume was richly bound in blue velvet, having the edges thereof guarded with bosses and clasps of gold, graven with curious devices. A large silver cresset, hung from the roof of the tent, gave light to the remainder of the apartment, and glanced upon a pile of bright steel armour, which lay beside a couch, and a thickly-quilted surcoat of blue and red velvet richly purfled with the arms of the Sovereign in most rare embroidery; but the sword belonging to this stately harness lay naked upon the table.

I had not been well able to note half of these objects, when the King started, and hastily, yet not uncourteously, accosted my knightly conductor with "How now! Who's there? what, is it thou, good De Mountford? hast thou performed that which I gave thee in charge some three days agone?"

"Aye, so please your Grace," answered the soldier, "it is done, as your Highness may eftsoons have proof of;" and with these words he pointed to myself, who was gazing upon the whole scene alike with wonder at the present and curiosity for the future, when he speedily put to flight my musings by drawing me for-

ward to the King, and directing me to kneel, which I incontinently did.

"Hah!" exclaimed the royal Richard, looking attentively at me, "he hath indeed her form!—this is right well and quickly done, my trusty Sir Gilbert; but I pray thee now repose thyself for awhile in the outer-tent, where thou wilt find food and wine set forth for thee, and leave this youth with me, we must have some conference together, which ended, I will send him to thee again."

Sir Gilbert De Mountford then made a low reverence to the King, and thanking him with all humble duty, retired, leaving me for the first time in my life in the presence of a Sovereign.

Great was my disorder at being thus left alone with so noble and exalted a personage; yet do I not speak of his greatness of rank only, but also of his goodly form and courteous manner; for that record of him is all untrue, which was written what time the Red Rose prevailed over the White, declaring that Richard was fearful to look upon. He was not, in truth, as one hath of late full slanderously described him, "little of stature, ill-featured of limbs, crook-backed, his left shoulder much higher than his right, and hard-favoured of visage;"*—none of these was he:

* This description of King Richard's person is in Sir Thomas More's imperfect History of his reign, supposed to have been written in Latin in 1508, and translated about the year 1813.

for though his person were not of the tallest, it was well up to the middle stature of men; and albeit one of his shoulders *might* be somewhat higher than it's fellow, yet he had a shrewd eye who did discover it, and a passing malicious wit who reported it to be a great deformity. As for his face, in good sooth it had none evil expression in it; though it was marked with much serious anxiety, and was pale and discoloured from weariness and an agitated mind, which scared his brief slumbers with fearful dreams, and gave occasion to his enemies to say that he was haunted by a guilty conscience. Nevertheless, his step and demeanour were full of pomp and royalty; so that it wanted not for any one to say even unto me, though but a simple cloister-bred youth, "that is the King!" since all men might well perceive that he could be of nothing less than the blood-royal, or the wearer of a crown. His habit was the close dress of red velvet which he wore under his armour, surmounted by a blue velvet robe lined with fair ermines, and choicely embroidered with the letter of his name in gold. The blue Garter of England embraced his knee, and the enamelled George thereof, hung to an azure scarf round his neck; whilst upon his head he wore a chapeau of red velvet and ermine, which threw his rich and full brown hair back upon his shoulders.

When Sir Gilbert De Mountford had gone forth from the tent, King Richard took up a lamp, and,

approaching me, gently grasped my hand, raised me, and drew me towards him, bidding me to fear nothing. Then, by the light he most curiously perused my features, and looked steadily at my visage for some brief space, though he spake not; whilst I, wondering much as to what this review of me might tend, somewhat faltered and looked downward. The King, observing this, deemed that I had trembled from fear of him, which nevertheless was not the case, since all his carriage was full gentle, and all his words of passing sweetness. "Why, how now, fair youth?" said he; "art thou afeard, that thou fallest back and tremblest thus? for I did mark thee right well."

To this I answered that I feared not, and added that I shrank backwards only from the sense of mine own unworthiness; being altogether unused to worldly glories, and so might not stand unabashed in the presence of a Sovereign.

"Why that is well said, my pretty youth," answered Richard; "thou seemest to have a passing shrewd wit for one of thy years and cloister-breeding; and for thy face, it altogether unmans me to look upon it, since it brings back unto my mind the dear and beauteous features of one whom I shall never behold again upon earth. Thy mother, boy,—"

"My mother!" hastily interrupted I with fervour, at this first mention of that most sweet word towards myself; "good my Lord," I continued, clasping the King's hand and again sinking on one knee, "tell me

of my mother, I implore you; say, I beseech you, where I may find her, and clasp her unto my heart."

The King seemed to struggle with divers sorrowful emotions, he permitted me to retain his hand, but he turned his face upward and covered it with the other; and at length replied in a sad and solemn voice, "She is where I also may be before this day be ended." The recollection of her then seemed to rush upon his memory in a flood of grief, as he gazed upon me and added, "Oh! she was a wondrous fair one; and thou, for a boy, hast no slight semblance of her; by the holy St. Agnes! thou hast her clear blue eye,—the very trick of her face: and she was a blessed creature, youth!—Nay, she *is* a blessed creature, for she is in Paradise! albeit our marriage was a hidden one. But, boy," interrupted he, in a fiercer tone, as I changed colour, and looked downwards with tears, "I do mistrust thee, and well believe that thou *dost* fear me. I wot that men tell strange tales of Richard Plantagenet, and thou, I deem, hast listened to them: say, hast thou not heard many speak evil things of me?"

I answered with a hesitating voice, that in the solitude of Ely Monastery the tidings which we heard of the world were but few and brief, and still more so to the Scholars and Novices; but this I said, because it greatly misliked me to tell him of the censure which common fame uttered against him.

"A wary answer," replied the King; "though

whiles thy speech saith thus, thine eyes, which have not yet learned to be of counsel with thy tongue, give altogether another response. The truth is, that thou hast heard me called murtherer, usurper, and tyrant; speak, boy, is it not so?"

I was much ashamed at being thus detected, and though it still pained me to acknowledge it, I dared no longer continue in my denial, for the which he lauded me; but demanded what I had heard of his crimes, and whether it were not that he had put his nephews in the Tower unto secret death. I now answered boldly that this had been reported, and, moreover, that he had caused their bodies to be crammed into coffins full of holes, and flung into the river of Thames in the night-tide.

"Now by holy Paul!" exclaimed the King fervently, and as methought with the indignation of innocence unjustly accused, "I would to God that every drop of that fair broad stream could be strained through a net of such small meshes, that not the puniest minnow might 'scape betwixt them; that all my subjects should know how guiltless I am of this murther! But slanders like these, boy, do ever dog the footsteps of royalty. The King upon his throne is a mark at which the base and envious of all degrees do shoot their bolts, if so be they bask not in the sunshine of his favour."

"I can well deem it, my gracious Lord," answered I, "for of such do we often read in the holy text."

"Aye," returned he, "and shouldest thou ever rise to greatness, prepare thee to encounter the like; should the fortunes of thy life be otherwise, let the avoidance of this slander be thy consolation."

Upon this I felt myself more than ever amazed, and at first somewhat doubted whether his speech were in sooth addressed to me, or whether I had heard him aright; I also sought in my mind for a fitting answer thereto, but found no words, until at length I said, "Methinks I would not desire to be a King; but every kind feeling of my soul is yearning to embrace my beloved, though unknown, parents."

"By the Blessed Virgin!" suddenly exclaimed the King, "he hath the very look and voice of my lost and deserted Matilda, melting with all the fervency of her ardent love, which again springs forth in the child of our dearest embraces.—I can counterfeit it no longer,—Youth!—Richard!—Plantagenet!—obscurity shall now cease to enwrap thee in it's veil,—IN ME BEHOLD THY FATHER!"

At this most wondrous avowal I felt a strange confusion run through all my veins; my heart beat quickly and powerfully, and my blood rushed forward unto my face as if with a sense of the high dignity I was born to, yet could I not choose but again sink before the feet of King Richard, and embrace his knees in silence and in tears. "I can well think, my fair son," said he at length, when his agitation first gave back to him the power of speech, "that wild

amazement hath bound up all thy senses; since the boldest dreams of thy youth-hood never lured thee to such a height of ambition, nor whispered how near thou stoodest to the crown of England! yet is it most true that thou art mine own noble son, since thy mother, my betrothed wife, was a creature of virtue upon earth, and is now a Saint in Heaven. Why her marriage and thy birth were concealed, is a tale too long to tell thee at this hour, when war is in the land; but this foul rebellion once quelled, all shall be made known."

"It is enough, my noble Lord and father," replied I, somewhat recovering from the confusion into which this marvellous succession of events had thrown me, "it is enough for me to have your countenance and favour; my most humble submission and duty you might have claimed before this gracious disclosure; but now, Sire, you have a double hold upon mine obedience, since I see in you my only living parent, as well as my Sovereign."

"Well spoken, my fair son," responded King Richard; "by the blessed soldier St. George! I had not thought to have loved thee thus, or to have told thee how great thou art, had not thy mother looked out so tenderly from thine eyes, and besought me not to forsake thee: yet could I not march forth to quell these base and daring rebels, without desiring to see and counsel thee as to thine after life; for perchance the day which is approaching may light me to my death!"

"Holy St. Mary defend your royal Grace!" exclaimed I, in alarm, devoutly crossing myself, "and scatter your foes as chaff before the wind; even as the sacred Psalter saith, May God clothe your enemies with confusion!"

"Grammercy for thy prayers, my young priest," answered the King merrily and exultingly, "pass but a few days more, and this drove of famished clowns, the scum of France, and the very refuse of it's goals and 'spital-houses, with Harry Richmond their leader, who now vainly menaces the safety of my throne, shall be swept away before the banners of Richard's army! whilst those who 'scape the axe, the sword, and the halter, shall sink into their wonted obscurity; and be heard of no more. For I swear to thee, boy, that having set my life and crown upon this stake, I will either win them and wear them as becometh a monarch and a conqueror, or leave my bloody corse upon the battle-field, as a pledge that I fairly played out the game like an undaunted soldier!"

Whilst he spake, his countenance glowed with the valour which then inspired him, his eyes flashed with a dark lustre, and he looked up with triumph; but upon turning his face downward, and beholding me who was intently gazing upon him, and, peradventure, with answering glances, he again became grave, and said, "For thee, Richard, my admonition must be, that thou presently depart hence with all speed: yet trust me that it much forethinketh me to give son of mine such counsel. Had but a few more summers

passed over thy head, and lifted thy youth to the verge of manhood, by the might of God I would have had thee buckle on thine harness, carried thee with me into the hottest fight, and there taught thee how to combat for the crown which even yet it may be thine to wear."

His deep and inspiring tones, and the energy with which he spake, seemed to make me glow with a desire for arms which I had never felt before; and gave me such stomach for conflict, that for a moment it appeared unto me a light thing to march forth with him, to do battle, and even to die, by his side. This courageous spirit being soon perceived by King Richard, he joyfully exclaimed, "Hah! by the glistening lustre of thine eyes, I see thou feelest full well the ardour of a soldier; and I would that thou mightest be one in very sooth, for Richard Plantagenet would smile even in the midst of death and bloodshed, to mark the young whirlwind of his own raising scatter to the Fiend the bold invader, which now makes head against the House of York."

At this time our conference was interrupted by the sound of the guards gisarmes striking twice upon the earth at the entrance of the tent, which was the King's appointed signal when any one approached his presence. A captain, whose name I remember not, then entered with divers letters, which King Richard took and forthwith read, giving the messenger certain scrolls in answer, and after brief speech dismissing

him. He then turned again unto me, and for that he had weighty matters which demanded his instant care, he pointed to his couch and bade me rest awhile, ordering wine and such provisions as his camp would furnish to be placed before me, until he should again have leisure to conclude our conference. With much careful attention the King then took up his letters and re-perused them, but their contents seemed greatly to perplex or to disturb him. He often wrote hastily, and to me appeared to be designing of a draught, which I deemed to be a map of the battle-field and the order of his armament. Sometimes also he rose and silently paced the tent with his arms crossed, and then walked forth to mark if his soldiers were watchful, and to issue divers commands unto his leaders. Yet were not his guards all vigilant; for in that night there was treachery in his camp, since Sir Simon Digby came thither as a spy, though at hazard of his life, and carried word thence unto Harry Tudor how the King was making him ready for battle. After this visitation of his camp, Richard anon returned, and seated him at the table again, erasing his former scription and writing as it were some newer and fairer copy. Thus was he occupied, perchance for more than an hour's space; during which time I did intently watch his motions, or marked the pavilion and it's furniture, and rich hangings of divers-coloured tapestry, and the bright polish of his embossed steel armour, with the other harness which was to fit him for the approach-

ing fight. The King, however, appeared not to note my presence, being as it were overwhelmed with the anxieties of royalty and the leading of a host on the eve of battle; but to me his every look and motion was matter of wonder or concernment, being the first of human creatures whom I had ever known as kindred, as well as the Sovereign of the realm.

The plain and frugal diet to which I had been accustomed in the Monastery of Ely, and the frequent vigils and brief slumbers which we were wont to use there, had made me taste but little of the food before me, and kept mine eyes from becoming drowsy with the lateness of the hour; yet I sank into a thoughtful musing upon my past and future fortunes, from which I was aroused only by the King touching me and saying: "Wake thee, my gentle son, wake thee, albeit I am full loath to break upon thy repose, yet is it now time that thou wentest hence. Thine eyes are open, yet still thy spirit sleepeth: for as yet thou hast not the weight of a diadem upon thy brow to keep thee wakeful, and cause slumber to fly from thy regal pillow." In reply I began to excuse myself, saying that I slept not, but was lost in thought at the wondrous matters he had disclosed to me.

"Nay," replied the King, "I had not marvelled hadst thou been in truth sleeping; so it asks not an excuse, for the eyelids of youth can be pressed into slumber by the weight of a thistle-down; and were I as free from years and care as thou art, trust me I

would rather share, than break, thy repose. But he who would be great, must set lightly by rest: though perchance thy school-philosophy hath taught thee that true wisdom would prefer the shepherd's crook to the monarch's sceptre. Nevertheless, my boy, these desires must issue from the mind alone: for as there be creatures which cannot live upon the earth, but fly towering aloft into the clouds, so there are men whose spirits as naturally soar on high after greatness and command, as doth the eagle wing his way upward all undazzled to the sun."

Whereunto I made reply, saying, "but now I deemed your Grace said, that you would I had been of years fit to go with you to battle, and fight for the crown of England."

"And so I would," answered Richard, "for as God shall speed me this day, I would see thee brave, aspiring, and invincible in the field as the immortal sable Knight,* the son of the Third Edward. And why? because thou too art the son of a Sovereign; and as I deemed, must share thy father's ardour."

"So please you, then, my gracious Sire," answered I, "if it stand with your liking to use my poor services, I shall gladly go forth with your knights into the field, and share in every danger to which your sacred person may be exposed." And even whilst I spake, a sad presentiment came over me that I should never more embrace my new-found parent, and in despite of me the tears ran down my face.

"Poor fool!" exclaimed King Richard, "thou art a passing well-spoken and tender youth, for even now thine eyes have bedewed thy cheeks; yet thy tears shame thee not as they are those of love and not of fear. But, no, it may not be, thou canst not go forth with me now; for ere another night enwrap the earth in darkness, I may be stretched a bloody and dishonoured corse upon yonder plain. Therefore thou shalt haste thee presently away, since to be known for mine would be thy sure destruction."

"I trust in God, Sire," said I with a faltering voice, "that this shall not be, but that you shall return again a victor."

"So trust I by the might of St. George and my good sword," answered the King, "yet will a wise leader ever provide against the worst, and my only fears are for thee. Take then this purse,—it is well filled with gold, which is the great ruler of mankind;—and this ring also, which was thy sainted mother's, and which, alas! that I am now in such straits, is all that I possess to bestow upon my son!"

Sinking on one knee and kissing the King's hand whilst I bedewed it with my tears, I received the parting gift of my royal father, greatly distressed at the sorrowful words which he spake to me; but much more so when he added:—"Now, my boy, mark well my latest counsel. Should the daring rebels who have provoked my sword be the conquerors in this day's fight,—though I deem that such a chance is well nigh

impossible,—then let no man know thy birth, but speedily depart for London, since thou may'st hide thee safest in a crowded city. There, bending thy mind unto thy fortunes, seek contentment in obscurity, and give up all thy newly-sprung hopes of honour and a crown: for never doubt that if the battle be lost to the House of York, the life of Richard Plantagenet will be lost also!"

He then tenderly embraced me, whilst sorrow and affection appeared to divide and possess his bosom. Mine own tears flowed even faster than before, and I could only murmur, that it was my hope that so fatal a calamity might not be; adding that such prayers as I had learnt of the holy fathers of Ely, should be fervently put up for his prosperity. To this he replied, "And I, also, my poor boy, commend thee to Heaven, albeit thine own innocence will best plead for thee there. But now thou must away, since it draws near sunrise; my soldiers will be here anon to arm me, and I must hold early council with my leaders.—Should ill befall me, do as I have warned thee, but till then, be merry in the hope that the arms of Richard shall drive these marauding renegades back to their coverts, as the lion scatters with his roar his subject herds of the forest.—Hie thee hence, then, my son,—my pretty boy,—nay, speak not,—I would not hear thy voice again, lest it waken in me that womanish softness which I must now smother beneath the sternness of a soldier. If we meet again, thou shalt

see me crowned with victory; and in the day of Richard's triumphant glory, will he proclaim thee a Plantagenet before England's proudest Barons, whilst the whole realm shall offer thee it's homage. Then will it be thine to command, and to enjoy a wealthy harvest for which thou didst never labour; and rising in after-time unto my high estate, thou shalt wear the crown for which I have adventured, and when thy life is over sleep in a regal sepulchre!" * *

Then, having again embraced me, he twice struck his sword upon the table, and a Captain entered, who forthwith led me to a tent where Sir Gilbert De Mountford awaited my coming. As the King parted from me at the opening of his pavilion, we marked the first dull dawnings of the fatal day of battle; upon which, pointing to the East he said unto his Captain, "Seest thou yonder, good Sir Gervase Clifton, how the grey morning is already advancing to rouse the dreaming foes of York from their brief slumber? and, so hopes my soul, speedily to light them onward to that which shall be eternal!"

CHAPTER III.

THE LAST BATTLE OF THE ROSES.

Then, Bosworth, here the Muse, now lastly bids for thee
Thy Battle to describe, the last of that long war,
Entitled by the name of York and Lancaster.
* * * * * * *
No sooner 'gan the dawn out of the East to peep,
But drums and trumpets chide the soldiers to their arms,
And all the neighbouring fields are covered with the swarms
Of those that came to fight and those that came to see,—
Contending for a Crown, whose that great day should be.

DRAYTON'S POLYOLBION.

——————— Think, ye see
The very persons of our noble story,
As they were living: think, ye see them great:—
——————— then, in a moment, see
How soon this mightiness meets misery!

SHAKSPEARE.

DEEPLY impressed and wondrously inspirited by the discourses and events of the last few hours, and animated by the martial array which surrounded me, I did most earnestly entreat of Sir Gilbert De Mountford to be permitted to witness the conflict. "See the battle, youth!" exclaimed he, "by St. George!

thou knowest not what thou art asking: And methinks for a stripling bred up in a cloister with monks and masses, it should be the last thing i'th' world that thou shouldest desire to look upon. Trust me a fight like this will be altogether another matter from reading of one, or from your processions and chauntings at a Saint's festival: for here will be bloodshed and mortal strife, shouts of victors and groans of the dying, whizzing of arrows, clang of armour, clash of weapons, and the fearful bray of trumpets, which alone would blanch thy cheek. Oh! 'tis a perilous, though a gallant sight; yet much danger is incurred thereby."

His lively portraiture of the scene only made me the more desirous of beholding it, and still did I persist in mine entreaties, to the which at length the Knight gave a reluctant consent, "Here, then, remain," added he, "for the King will leave his tents standing when he marches to Redmoor; and from this rising ground thou mayest see the fight as well and securely as such a scene may ever be looked upon."

I therefore, took my stand on the verge of the eminence where King Richard's camp was pitched, which looked towards the plain of Redmoor, and marked attentively the several preparations for battle; though Sir Gilbert De Mountford did not fail to repeat that my purpose was a rash one, and might terminate in evil. Howbeit, every thing which I saw and heard was fitted to excite the ardour of a soldier

in my youthful breast; and well,—so at least did my vanity whisper me,—did mine enkindling spirit prove at that moment, that I was not unworthy of the Plantagenet race. I felt their lion-blood was bounding in my veins; and could I have given vent to mine emotions, it would have been in bewailing the fortune which forced me to be only an eye-witness of that well-foughten field, and debarred me from entering as a soldier therein. The image of the King my father, as I had seen him on the past night, when he owned me for his son, pale and melancholy in visage, and decked with few of his regalities, was full deeply graven upon my mind; but now I beheld him clad in a rich armour of proof, and as mine eyes anxiously followed the royal banner and King Richard's person wherever they appeared upon the plain, I fondly deemed, when the sun glanced upon his burnished helmet and golden coronal, that it was the glorious light of victory to Plantagenet. His entire harness was of steel with gilded ornaments, wrought by the choicest armourers of Modena, and made in that rich fashion for the which his reign was so famous; whilst his habit was so complete a sheathing to his body, that he stood as it were an iron man, saving that he wore his velvet tabard, the royal ensigns of which were also purfled upon the caparisons of his charger. He wielded a long and powerful two-handed sword having a red pomel, but he had dyed the blade thereof with a more sanguine stain, in the

blood of his foes; seeing that, like the scythe of death, it swept away all before it.

But to treat of the Battle in order, as becometh one that saw it and lost therein his best and nearest friend, I should begin by noting that the morning came on with a heavy mist, which passed not away until nigh ten of the clock, when the armies joined battle; through the vapour of which, when they were first drawn out, the one overshot the other. Howbeit, soon after four in the morning, what time the sun should have risen, King Richard led forth all his men out of his camp, on to the plain of Redmoor; ordering out both horse and foot in a marvellous length, to the intent that they should imprint upon the hearts of them that looked afar off, a sudden terror and deadly fear. In the fore-front, he placed the archers, like a strong trench or fortified bulwark, over whom the noble John Howard, Duke of Norfolk, was Captain, with his brave son, Thomas, Earl of Surrey; after which long vaunt-guard, followed King Richard himself, with a full gallant company drawn up in a perfect square, of choice and approved men of war, having horsemen with spears, for wings, on both sides of his battle. The King's rear-ward was led by Sir Thomas Brackenbury, the sum of it, as I have heard, being a thousand bill-men and soldiers armed with heavy mallets and sharp axes.

So marched they forward unto Sutton-field, where the whole army mustered, being some mile South-east

of the place of battle, and there halted before Richmond had crossed the marsh on his right hand, which separated them; when, lo! there was a solemn stillness in King Richard's power, of the which I might not well know the cause. Whereupon I turned me unto a bill-man who stood near the mound where I was placed, and demanding of him what meant that silence, he told me that the King had called together his leaders, and was encouraging them in many goodly words to fight stoutly to the end against the traitors and renegades which had come out against them. Upon that I felt my heart burn within me to hear my noble sire speak unto his soldiers, and put mettle into their hearts, for that I well knew he had a choice and copious eloquence; and therefore, regardless of Sir Gilbert De Mountford's counsel, I hastened forward to the spot where the royal army was assembled. From the speech which King Richard made there, the little hillock where he stood is called "Dickon's Nook" unto this day; but I reached it in time to hear only the end of his oration, which he gave with a voice of thunder and an eye of fire. "Advance! then," exclaimed he, "I say again, forward, my Captains! in whom lacketh neither policy, wisdom, nor puissance; let each of you give but one brave stroke for England and your King, and St. George to speed, the day is surely our's. For myself, by the might of God and his Saints, I will either triumph by glorious victory, or die for mine immortal

fame ; since they who regard not that renown before their fleeting life, shall ever live with scorn and fall with foul dishonour."

As he concluded the soldiers loudly shouted, yet were they not all true unto their Sovereign ; for Thomas Lord Stanley, and Sir William, his brother, were there, with all their men, about 8000 in number, who soon turned and fought with fierce courage against the King. At this time also, when the Earl of Richmond knew that the royal army was so near embattled, he rode about his own ranks speaking many deceitful and glosing words unto his soldiers, with wondrous foul sayings against Richard ; the which he had scarcely finished when the one army came in sight of the other. And then, Blessed Virgin ! how hastily did the soldiers buckle their helms, how quickly the archers bent their bows and frushed their feathers, to make them ready for flight like the wings of death. Then, too, how readily the bill-men shook their bills and proved their staves, to march and join battle, when the cry should be given "Advance Standards !"

When the King saw that Richmond's power had passed the marsh, he commanded with all speed to set upon them ; and then heard I the terrible blast of the trumpets, which as it were bade them to the feast of blood, with the loud shouting of the soldiers, and the snorting of the chargers. Anon the King's archers let fly a cloud of shafts, and all the air

around was darkened; and when the bowmen on either side had spent all their arrows, and the bombards and harquebushes had been many times shot off, then the battle joined, and all came to hand-strokes of sword, bill, and battle-axe, and bloody I trow was that onset. Full many a soldier, whom but the moment before, I had seen, as the holy text saith, "like the war-horse rejoicing in his strength," was eftsoons overthrown, and his towering crest trampled under foot all sullied and dishonoured. But now, whilst I was thus anxiously watching the fight, I suddenly saw two large and heavy bodies of armed men put in motion, one on the King's right hand and the other on his left; and I said unto a wounded bowman who had crawled unto the place where I stood, which was now very near the field of battle, "Tell me, soldier, be not these the King's friends? whence, then, do they come, and why have they lingered thus?"

"Now God be praised," replied the Archer, raising himself and looking on the leaders' pennons, "they are the power of the Stanleys, which will past question give our royal master the victory;" and he pointed out to me their white banners, bearing three golden stags' heads upon a bend of blue. Howbeit, in the midst of our hope and rejoicing, a deafening shout arose from Richmond's army; denoting, as I was told, the treacherous going over of the Stanleys thereunto, with all their followers. I was much dismayed at these tidings, and greatly feared the issue of the

battle; and the more so by reason of my former expectations of King Richard's triumph. I remember not at what hour of the day it might be,—perchance it wanted not much of noon,—but about this stage of the fight I left my stand, and wandered down into the battle-field. Perceiving at some distance a company of horsemen who appeared to have been separated from the main body, I hastened towards them, seeing that they were clad in white coats and hoods of frieze, the common livery of all the soldiers. He, however, who seemed to be chief of the party, I knew not, but he appeared a tall and fair young man with a grave countenance, yellow hair, and grey eyes, and clothed in a wondrous rich harness; whilst beside him rode a brave-looking Knight, who bore a green and white banner with a red dragon.

The hour was now come which God had appointed, when by drawing thus near unto the enemy,—these warriors being none other than Richmond and his friends,—that I should behold the fall of the valiant King Richard; his bravest leaders, the Duke of Norfolk and his son, having been stretched lifeless on the field already. Only a brief space had elapsed, when I saw the King with some few of his best followers, who, alas! did not know that they were going with him unto death,—riding with great fury towards the spot to which I had heedlessly wandered. He seemed inflamed with wrath, and came on, crying "Treason! Treason!" with spear in rest, like an angry lion

against his adversary; and oft-times when I have mused upon this scene, have I demanded of myself in the words of the most choice Poet Horatius:

"Quis martem digne scripserit?"

And who, indeed, shall worthily write of his gallant bearing in that day? or what lay of Minstrel or what music of Harper, shall truly laud his achievements and more than mortal prowess? for the which even his enemies, amidst all their foul calumnies, have never dared to deny him renown. As, therefore, an overwhelming torrent runs foaming with wild roar over opposing rocks, and pours onward with impetuous fury unto the sea, so did the King pursue his most resistless course. He soon laid aside his spear, and took again his fearful two-handed sword; with which at one blow he cleft the head of Sir William Brandon, who was the first foe he met in his progress. He was the Standard-bearer of Harry Richmond, but soon he lay stretched upon the plain; and the banner which only a few moments before he had waved so proudly, the King now contemptuously cast upon his bloody corse. Then stood forth that puissant Knight, Sir John Cheney, whom the Earl held in special regard, not only because of his martial prowess, but also for his bodily strength, which was passing great; but he, too, was eftsoons unhorsed by the King, who now made an open yet bloody passage with his devouring sword, as he pressed onward to his chiefest adversary. Fearful,

indeed, was his onset towards Richmond, and might well have daunted a braver man: yet why came he not forth in willing mood to battle for the crown, and encounter his royal foe in mortal fray? Wherefore did he gather his power around him? but that his coward fears prevailed—and he moved not.

For some space of time, however, the Earl withstood him and kept him at the sword's point; but I full soon perceived that it was not in equal combat, that the noble Richard was either to triumph or to die; for to sum up the treachery of "those of his own household," of which the holy Prophet well speaketh, Sir William Stanley brought up his power of full 3000 men to the aid of Harry Tudor. Howbeit, some ten years after his disloyalty had it's reward; since he was beheaded by command of the very one whose life he had now saved, and whom, in truth, he had advanced unto a throne.* These recreant slaves now gathered round Richard, and he was fiercely assailed on every side; but though Sir William Catesby, who saw Stanley's revolt, brought the King another horse, and besought him to retire,—which, from pressure of numbers, he might have done with honour,—yet with an

* Sir William Stanley was beheaded on February 16th, 1495, on the charge of secretly aiding Perkin Warbeck, the fictitious Duke of York; the principal evidence against him being his having said, "Were I sure he was the son of Edward the Fourth, I would never draw my sword against him."

angry look, he called for a fresh weapon, and sware by Him that shaped sea and land that he would that day die King of England, and not fly whilst life should abide in his breast. So continued he in fight, till all the friends who had followed him had either fallen or fled; for Sir Robert Brackenbury, Sir Gervase Clifton, Sir Richard Ratcliffe, Sir William Conyers, Walter Lord Ferrers, and divers others, lay dead around him. Indignant, and almost frenzied at this sight, I now rushed forward, all unarmed and powerless as I was, to the rescue of my sire, and forgetful of danger threw myself into the midst of the strife! How it was my fortune to escape therefrom, without being mortally stricken in that hour of battle and of blood, when blows were rained around me on every side, by hands and weapons which were not wont to strike twice for the overthrow of any foeman;—how, I say, I did then escape with life, He, whose "Name is Wonderful," alone doth know!

Yet it nevertheless *did* so fall out, that unhurt myself, I advanced into that most fearful battle; which hath oft-times since brought unto my mind the saying of holy David, "a thousand shall fall beside thee, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee." In the hottest fight, then, whilst gazing wildly around me, I beheld my martial sire still waging the unequal strife. The blood was streaming from his wounds, his strength seemed already passing away, and his battered casque and crown had fallen

from his head,—when a blow from a ponderous iron battle-axe struck him from his horse. I now sprang forward to his side, and seizing a helmet lying near, filled it with water from that most honoured Well of the which I have elsewhere spoken, and of which I had before seen him drink,—and bare it unto him to wash his wounds and quench the heat of his death-thirst. He hastily took it and drank thereof, and then piously looking upwards and devoutly crossing himself, fell backwards with the wounded and the slain; yet as he did so, methought his dying eyes rested on me with pity and alarm at my presence, in a place and hour of so great hazard.

From that moment I saw and heard no more, being first suddenly stricken down and wounded by a spent shaft, and afterwards overborne by the crowd of soldiers which rushed upon the dying Richard, as it hath since been told me, to seize upon the coronet which he wore around his helmet. For he was the only English Sovereign since the Norman entered this land, who fell upon the battle-field; and the second who fought with the crown upon his head, as did King Henry V. at Agincourt. And here we may again note his valour, for the regal circlet, however fair and glorious, is the surest mark for the wearer's destruction; but Richard wore it to put mettle into his soldiers' hearts and arms, and to remind them that the fate of a King and his realm was on that day to be intrusted to their weapons. Howbeit, in the last fiery

struggle of the life of my gallant father, the crown fell from his head, and was hidden by a soldier within a bush on the field; whence, after the battle, Sir Reginald Bray brought it unto the recreant Lord Stanley, who set it on the head of Harry Tudor. The inconstant soldiery then shouted for their new King, and a broad mound some mile to the South-west of the battle-plain, yet marks the place of their triumph by being called Crown-Hill and Hollow-Meadow. Richmond, too, in that beauteous, yet vain-glorious, tomb which hath since been built for him at Westminster, hath recorded this rustic coronation, by erecting there the device of a crown standing in a bush of hawthorn.

In the mean space, King Richard's body was found upon the plain, covered with dust, blood, and wounds, and despitefully stripped of all it's harness and raiment; so that he, who whilst living was clad in purple and pall, fair ermines and velvet of the Orient, who had a crown upon his head and the bâton of command in his hand;—when dead had not aught to hide his royal corse from the jeers and gazings of the rudest of his realm! But yet, whilst I am noting this most melancholy truth, I may not forget to set down what was told unto me of the loyalty and faith of William St. Leger, King Richard's Pursuivant-of-Arms, called *Blanc-Sanglier*, or the White Boar, in memory of his noble device. For, at his royal coronation at Westminster, by Thomas Bourchier, the Archbishop of Canterbury, on Sunday, the 6th day of

July, 1483,—but two little years before his sorrowful death,—he caused 13,000 badges of Boars to be wrought in silver upon fustian, and given to his followers, whilst he 'stablished this Pursuivant, whose tabard was purfled with the like, to keep the same in memory. Master St. Leger was of the house, though not of the counsel, of that Sir Thomas St. Leger, who had married King Richard's sister, the Duchess of Exeter; though he joined the traitorous Duke of Buckingham in his rebellion, and so was beheaded.

Howbeit, the Pursuivant was one of greater honour and truth, for as he worthily adhered unto his Lord whilst living, so neither would he forsake him when dead; but when he first saw his bloody and naked corse, all unheeding of his own danger, he took off his Herald's coat-of-arms, and casting it on the body of his forsaken master, he said: "Alas for thee! King Richard! now liest thou there, naked, and dead, and deserted; albeit I dare well say of thee that thou wert once a right wise and valiant Sovereign. Wherefore the coat of thine arms which thou gavest me in thy life-time, I do now give unto thee back again, to be a winding-sheet unto thy well-wounded body, as becometh one who did ever love the voice of the Herald, and one who was as stout a soldier as ever bestrode steed in battle. Henceforth will I wear tabard no more, nor be Pursuivant unto mortal man; for with thee, I wot, shall the name of *Blanc-Sanglier* pass away and be forgotten, but I will take none other

name, and bow me to none other lord. And so, Fare thee well, good King Richard! may God give rest unto thy soul, and Christ save thee in the Day of Doom!"

And as this faithful Pursuivant said, so it proved: for after the death of King Richard, it was as if men wished his memory to be altogether blotted out and buried with his body, for his device of the Silver Boar was defaced or plucked down in every place where it had been reared; and the honourable office of *Blanc-Sanglier* changed into another called *Rouge-Dragon*, in memory of the Standard of Harry Tudor. Nay, yet farther to dishonour the dead Sovereign and his constant living follower, that most loyal Herald was enforced,—even upon the afternoon of the day of battle,—to carry King Richard's body to Leicester, uncovered and tied with cords across a horse, he sitting behind it; but this he did gladly, seeing that all men should thus note his fidelity, though he wept many bitter tears upon his mournful journey. After that most dear and misused corse had been for two days exposed in the Town-hall to the basest groom and rudest hind which would look upon it, it was meanly, and with but few holy rites, sepultured in the Grey-Friars' Church; where the usurping victor at length caused to be set up a tomb of divers-coloured marbles with an alabaster effigy,—albeit he afterward made his own of brass, most wondrously and choicely wrought. For this monument, all unworthy of so great a King

as Richard Plantagenet, some unknown pen had also destined an untrue and as unworthy an epitaph in Latin verse; the copy whereof, though never affixed unto the stone, I remember to have seen written in a book chained unto a table, in a chamber of the Guildhall at London. Howbeit, the tomb of my sire stood but little more than fifty years; since in that fierce tide of spoliation which hath of late swept through the realm under the wild misrule of Harry Tudor's son, the Grey Friars of Leicester were expulsed from their dwelling, their conventual church was overthrown, and the tomb of King Richard so defaced, that the spot whereon he rested might be distinguished no longer.

But now to return again, and briefly close up another scene of my own sad story. When I saw my sire fall upon the field of Bosworth; when I marked the dying look of sorrow, love, and pity, which he then cast upon me; and when I was overthrown by the shaft, and press of the battle;—my strength and senses at once bowed under me, and I sank powerless upon the ground, as if I also had been one of the slain.

CHAPTER IV.

THE DWELLING OF AN OUTCAST OF ISRAEL.

Our firste foe, the Serpent Sathanas,
That hath in Jewés heart his waspés nest,
Up swaie, and said "O Ebraike people, alas!
Is this to you a thing that is honést?
That swiche a boy shall walken as him leste
In your despite."——

From thennésforth the Jewés han conspired
This innocent out of this world to chase.

CHAUCER'S PRIORESS'S TALE.

"Blessed be the name of the Lord!" echoed Rabbi Meir, "and blessed be His name for thy sake too! for well is it written 'He that has found a virtuous woman has a greater treasure than costly pearls. She openeth her mouth with wisdom, and on her tongue is the instruction of kindness.'"

HURWITZ'S HEBREW TALES.

I KNOW not how long I lay so entranced upon the plain of battle, but when my senses returned, I found me stretched upon a narrow and slender straw pallet, in a low and obscure vaulted chamber of stone, from the top whereof was suspended a little brazen lamp. By this light I beheld a tall old man, with a flowing beard of a sable silvery hue, dark piercing eyes, and

a thin sallow visage of a foreign look, on the which care seemed to have written many deep characters,—standing beside my poor couch; habited in a long gaberdine of coarse black frieze, marked on the breast by two narrow woollen tablets of different colours. He was at first bending silently over me, with a grave and sorrowful countenance, whereon methought I saw the trace of tears, and then I deemed he might be some compassionate leech; but, as I recovered, his face seemed anon to be enlightened with an evil gladness, as if the Fiend had suddenly whispered some dark, though joyous thought unto his heart, and he cast upon me a look of exulting malice. Full many were the dread imaginings and remembrances which now rushed across my returning sense; but my sorrowful recollections of the late fatal battle, and the hapless death of my royal father, together with the pain and smarting of my wounds, and even the grief which weighed down my spirit,—all seemed light unto the horror I felt upon finding me in the power of one, who might be an outlaw, a robber, or a murtherer. For escape, I soon discovered that it was impossible, even had my strength been equal thereunto; for the narrow arched portal and winding stairs which led to the chamber wherein I lay, were closed up by a heavy oaken door, provided with a massive lock and bolt of iron.

As these things flitted, like some foul vision, full swiftly before my disordered senses and beclouded

eyes, I lay in great fear and consternation, scared at the form and visage of him who was bending over me. He seemed unto mine affrighted fancy, like an evil night-spirit which chained up all my powers of moving with stifling oppression; for when I attempted to stir me, I found myself wholly incapable thereof, partly, indeed, from my hurts in the battle, but still more so from the terrors awakened by that which I saw around me. I did then strive to call for aid, but my tongue clave unto the roof of my mouth, and I could utter little more than a faint cry, and sink down again as if into a heavy slumber; though whilst my voice thus refused me it's office, mine eyes and ears seemed to perform their's with a tenfold power. I saw and heard all things with wondrous intenseness; from the harsh foreign voice of the man who stood beside me, which sounded like the knell of my departing spirit, to the quick and heavy throbbings which seemed tearing in sunder mine aching and fevered brain. Howbeit, the cry I had uttered, caused another person hastily to enter the chamber; the which I discerned to be an aged woman, habited in somewhat of an Eastern garb, whose sallow and sunken visage did express much sorrow, blended with great pity and piety. She started as she entered, without doubt at the fearful glances with which the old man was viewing me as he bent over my bed, and she exclaimed "Wherefore was that cry, Rabbi Israel? and what is that youth beside thee? hath his

spirit departed? or why dost thou look so wildly upon him?"

"Nay, he is not yet dead, Naomi," returned the man, retiring with her from my couch, behind a screen of tapestry whence I might overhear all their discourse, "the Angel of Death has not yet summoned him, though peradventure he soon may. God of my Fathers!" he exclaimed in an exulting voice, "when hath the word of Thy promise failed unto Thy people? for, lo! the hour of vengeance, which hath been hidden in mine heart, hath at length arrived; and Thou hast provided an offering for innocent blood, as Thou gavest the ram unto thy servant Abraham in Moriah, that he might slay him instead of his son."

"Alas!" replied Naomi in a gentle voice, "what meanest thou by this?"

"What do I mean? sayest thou," returned the Rabbi in a fierce tone, "are then the captivity of thy people, and the death of thy son, forgotten by thee like a dream of the night? Are not we bereaved both of our home and of our child? our feet made weary with wandering, and our hearts sorrowful with weeping, by the persecutions of the Gentiles, and shall we not rejoice to return it fourfold upon the heads of our oppressors?"

"Nay, Rabbi Israel, nay," answered Naomi, with tranquil speech, "that may not be; seeing that it was written by him, who, at the command of God

led us forth out of Egypt,—even in the last divine song which he spake upon earth, 'To Me belongeth vengeance and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time, for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. For the Lord shall judge His people, and repent Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone!'"

"Yet the time of Israel's deliverance hath not come," returned the Rabbi, "we look in vain for 'Him whose Name is the Rising,' and pray for Him in vain towards our desolated Temple: yet as if it were not enough for the chosen people of the Most High, to be forced to wander far from the Land of Canaan, eating the bread of bitterness and drinking the waters of affliction,—the crescent-ensign of the lying Prophet, rises with baneful glare over the towers of the Holy City, flouting the goodly heritage that was once our own. And when, chased like the partridge on the mountain, we betake us for shelter to the nations of the West, what is it but to encounter the like persecution, desolation, or death? Yea, bloody alike unto us are the crescent and the cross; and to the outcasts of Israel, the monks and the moussoulmans are alike brethren in cruelty."

"Thou hast spoken truly, Rabbi," replied Naomi, "as our father Joseph said, their anger is fierce, and their hatred is cruel. But now let us leave to speak of them:—thou hast not yet told me who that stripling is."

"One," answered the Rabbi, "whom I brought erewhile from the field of battle near this place, for the children of this accursed land are divided against themselves, and are even now devouring each other; and therefore, we can scarcely marvel that they are foes to the despised sons of Israel.—I had borne up under all the heavy woes which are now common to our abandoned race, in a strange land; but *here* have I found the arrows of persecution stick the deepest, since this people hath received us only to pour greater misery upon our heads, and have trodden down the grey hairs of the parents to dip their hands in the blood of their offspring, whilst our tears only ministered sport unto the scorner!"

"I remember it but too well," responded Naomi, weeping, "Benoni, the son of our sorrows, but yet our pleasant son, was indeed stoned before our eyes by a lawless multitude on the Fast of Miriam, when we were about to make ready for the Passover. Oh! my son, Benoni! my son, my son, Benoni!

"It was verily so," answered the Rabbi, "and for that he was *only a Jew*, there hath been no inquisition of blood made for him. But said I not that vengeance would at length come, though it should tarry long? and behold the hour hath now arrived." He then continued with a glance of malicious exultation, and in a low and fearful voice, drawing the gentle Naomi towards my couch, and pointing to me who now lay with the semblance of sleep,—"Seest thou that young

Christian, whom I have brought hither?—his look and bearing bespeak him of gentle birth,—thou knowest that our Law saith 'an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth!'—the solitude of this place invites us to the sacrifice; let him die the death! for God do so unto me, and more also, if I would not even now avenge our child's murther upon the life of that sleeping gentile!"

"Upon his life! saidst thou? God of Jacob protect thee from the Evil One!" exclaimed Naomi, clinging to his garment in an agony of fear, "nay, Rabbi Israel, nay, that may not be! for our most holy Law doth also say 'thou shalt not kill'! He shall indeed die, as thou sayest, but at his appointed time when the Angel of Death shall call him, and not by thy hand; since thou canst not thus bring back again our Benoni unto our bosoms, but will rather stain our souls so deeply, that we shall never live with him in Paradise."

"What then!" exclaimed the Jew fiercely, "shall a bereaved father shrink from becoming the avenger of his child's blood? let me no longer, woman, for, as the Lord liveth! this offering shall eftsoons be made, since He hath said 'whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed!'"

"True, Oh my beloved Israel!" responded the virtuous Naomi, hanging upon the Jew as she spake, "yet not the innocent for the guilty, lest his blood should rest upon us, and hereafter be required at our hands." Then, seeing that he still remained unshaken

in his evil purpose, she turned aside, and in a voice of sorrow, with many tears, she said, "Alas for my son! alas for my Benoni, my child! where is he now? in the bosom of our Father Abraham, and the blessed Paradise of God?—Ah! no!—or Rabbi Israel, the devout servant of the Lord,—who hath never forgotten the *Shemoneh Esreh*, or the *Kiriath Shema*,* or to bless his God full three hundred times each day; who fasteth and prays with his face unto Jerusalem; and who hath often, like our Father Tobias, left his meat to bury the dead,—he would never have devised such evil in his heart, as to think of avenging our innocent son, by so wicked a sacrifice! Or can our child have indeed put off his innocency? that his once-pious father deems him now to be another Moloch, whose wrath can be turned aside only by the dying groans of the young, and by pouring out before him the blood of the little ones!"

* The *Shemoneh Esreh*, or Eighteen prayers, are some of the most solemn and important of the Jewish rites; and should be used thrice daily by all Israelites who are of age. They form a kind of litany, each prayer including a benediction; and are said to have been composed and instituted by Ezra, and the members of the Great Synagogue, a little before the destruction of the second Temple. The *Kiriath Shema*, or reading of certain portions of the Law, is also another very important part of the daily devotions; and as there are benedictions provided for almost every action or event of life, the members of the Synagogue are required to repeat at least an hundred blessings every day.

The aged Israelite now stood affected and irresolute, whilst Naomi paused and uttered a half-suppressed sigh; after which she laid her hand in a gentle supplicating manner upon her partner's shoulder, and continued thus in a voice of tenderness, and consoled sorrow.

"Our son, indeed, rests calmly in the silent grave where the wicked cease from troubling; and his spirit is in truth not crying from the ground for blood, but is rather breathing upon his sorrowing parents, the holy quiet of the heaven wherein he dwells. Thou knowest, my beloved spouse, that with us life is already running upon the lees, and I pray thee let not it's remaining hours be embittered by self-reproach and late remorse; since it were pity that our recollections of the past, sad, indeed, though they be, should now be overshadowed with the dark whispers of the Evil One. Methinks, Rabbi," added she, "that this youth is not much unlike our own; and from his looks he should be somewhat of the same age."

"If then," replied Israel sternly, as though again awakened to hatred, "the *living* semblance of this stripling be thus strong, death will complete it!"

"The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan!" exclaimed Naomi in a bolder and louder voice than she had yet uttered, at the same time laying a stout hold upon the Jew, "as the holy Prophet saith, 'the Lord rebuke thee! even the Lord who hath chosen Jerusalem;' is not this child brought from the battle, indeed a brand

plucked out of the fire? Rabbi, thou knowest well there was a Voice which said, 'I desired mercy and not sacrifice;' and doubt not that at this moment there be hearts beating with anxiety and fear for the safety of this youth, and that his *Mashal** in Heaven is watching over him to protect him."

"Yet our own son—" responded the Rabbi—

"Fell by the hands of a strange people who shall answer for their sin," interrupted Naomi, "Oh my Israel! be this evil far from thee, and may the foul spirit which hath vexed thee depart unto the deeps, whilst I rehearse in thine hearing the blessed verses of the holy Prophet touching the triumphant restoration of Jacob; albeit it is like singing one of the songs of Zion in a strange land." The devout and benevolent Jewess then brought from behind the tapestry a piece of most choice embroidery of gold and silver flowers upon crimson silk, and took from thence a parchment roll written in a square black character; out of which she read with such a marvellous pleasant and comforting voice, that, notwithstanding all my fears and sorrows, it joyed me greatly to listen unto it. Old age had not yet stolen from it all the sweetness of it's younger years, and though it began with a plaintive tone, it gradually increased into a swell of holy triumph and pious bliss. That which she read was part of the Prophet Esay,

* Guardian Angel.

in Hebrew, so that at this time I might not understand it; but as she hath since told me it was her most delightsome song in the house of her pilgrimage, and she taught it unto me with the true interpretation thereof, which in the tongue of our own nation, is written as followeth:—

"But thou, Israel! my servant—
Fear thou not; for I am with thee;
Be not dismayed;
For I am thy God.
I will strengthen thee;
Yea, I will uphold thee
With the right hand of my righteousness.

Fear not, thou worm, Jacob!
And ye, men of Israel!
I will help thee, saith the Lord
And thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.

Fear not, for I have redeemed thee;
I have called thee by thy name;
Thou art mine.
When thou passest through the waters,
I will be with thee;
And through the rivers
They shall not overflow thee:
When thou walkest through the fire,
Thou shalt not be burned:
Neither shall the flame kindle upon thee.

Fear not; for I am with thee;
I will bring thy seed from the East,
I will gather thee from the West:

I will say to the North,—'Give up!'
And to the South,—'Keep not back!
Bring my sons from afar,
And my daughters from the ends of the earth!'"

As Naomi read these most sublime words, the old Israelite first became silent, and crossing his hands upon his breast, paced about the chamber several times in great agitation, as if struggling against some forcible though inward temptation; whereof his blood-shotten eyes, and the convulsive working of his lips bewrayed how fearful was the conflict. Anon, as the divine Prophecy continued, he became calmer; and as it concluded he approached a small wooden frame, through which air and light were admitted to that narrow apartment, and, having thrown it open, he fell upon his knees, beating his breast and crying, "I have sinned! I have sinned!" Then, turning his face unto the East, he covered it with his hands, and remained for some time engaged in silent and earnest prayer. In a short space he arose, but his countenance had undergone a wondrous change; for albeit the deep lines which time and sorrow had traced thereon with a pen of iron, were still indelibly depicted there, yet were they now greatly softened, and divested of their former fierceness. His eyes were also glistening with tears, and beamed with kindly aspect, declaring his victory over those cruel thoughts and evil purposes, that with such volcanic fury had been raging in his bosom.

He now turned to his aged wife who had likewise been praying and giving thanks, but had risen and seated herself upon a low stone bench in the wall, and addressed her with—"Naomi, thou wert the joy of my youth, and, verily, thou art the staff and comfort of my old age. The harp of the son of Jesse could charm away the evil thoughts and foul spirits which troubled Saul, and behold thy gentle voice, and the sweet song of the son of Amoz, hath calmed the fierce desire of vengeance which the Destroyer had for a moment awakened within my soul. Fear not thou for the lad; the child of our worse than Egyptian taskmasters shall be cared for and protected, even by the strangers, who for themselves, can find no resting-place in this land. Yea, we will bind up his wounds with the healing arts of our nation; albeit unto me he seemeth rather to want thy tender care, than the skill of the leech. A brief time will bring back his youthful strength, and we may then learn from him who, and what he is, and to whom we should restore him; and, in the mean space, quiet and slumber will be his best medicaments." With these words they both arose and quitted the apartment.

Albeit the mild discourse and tranquillised demeanour of Rabbi Israel, and the pious and gentle speech of the good Naomi, had somewhat calmed my disquieted spirit, yet could I not cease to think with great horror that I was in the power of a *Jew!* of one of that hateful race, which brought up, as I had

been, on the very lap of our Holy Church,—I could consider in no other light than as the common enemies of Christendom, and as being in a state of ceaseless hostility to the body and soul of man. The ancient monastic annals of this realm, such as the noble history of the wise Matthew Paris, and the Chronicles of Thomas Wikes, or of Dunstaple Priory, which our good instructor, Father Austin, would sometimes read unto his pupils, often spake of the cruelties of the abandoned Jews towards Christians, whiles they were suffered to remain in our land. They were commonly represented as being infectious as their own native leprosy, and devouring as the Arabian locusts. It had, indeed, been told me, that at this time they no where existed as a body in England, but reports were not wanting that their love of gain still brought them into the country whence they were banished; and that they yet moved about us in darkness and secresy, like the vampires of Eastern climes, searching for those whom they might plunder or sacrifice. They were thus suspected rather than convicted, and felt rather than known; whilst to gain their ends, they were sometimes said even to join in the detested rites of our Holy Church, and to adore that cross which they abhorred. Then, too, I remembered how it had been told me, that this people at once so despicable and so dangerous, cut off from their country and kinsfolk, endured their captivity, even in those places where they were admitted to dwell, only for lucre

and wicked usury; by which they drew unto themselves the wealth of the commons, that covetous Princes and nobles might wrest it from them into their own coffers.

Anon my too-ready memory brought back unto me every wild tale and fearful history, which I had heard or read of the blood-thirsty Hebrews; and specially of their seizing upon and hiding Christian children, feasting them with dainty food, milk and white bread, and at last crucifying them in despite and mockery of the holy Founder of our Faith. I remembered now, also, as if it were to confirm these stories and increase my fears, that in the Cathedral of Lincoln stood the shrine of the blessed young Martyr, St. Hugh; a child whom the vengeful Jews had thus put to death, in the year 1256, the fortieth of the reign of Henry III.; though the good canons of the church had wondrously recovered his body and given unto it a stately burial, as his story is written by Matthew Paris. This was followed by the legend of that holy young child whom the Jews wantonly caused to be slain in Asia, as I had heard recited at Christmas-tide, out of Master Chaucer's immortal histories: whereupon I remembered me that the fair infant did ever and anon sweetly sing that antiphon in the Office to our Lady, beginning "*Alma Redemptoris Mater,*" by the which he was wondrously discovered after his murther. And so, taking courage, I did silently call upon the Blessed Virgin Mother and her most Holy

Child, in like manner; nor did I make mine orisons in vain, since the anthem was neither unmarked nor unanswered. Tranquillity and comfort were given unto my troubled spirit, as I thought upon the mild and sorrowful speech of Naomi, and the calmer deportment of the Jew; and though I was still as it were encaged with these unbelievers, I trusted that my body and spirit would soon recover their wonted strength, that I might have the power of resistance if any violence should be offered unto me.

CHAPTER V.

A FARTHER DISCOVERY OF THE JEW'S HEART AND HISTORY.

No resting could he finde at all,
No ease, nor heart's content,
No house, nor home, nor dwelling-place;
But wand'ring forth he went.

And he doth suffer all this paine
Of torments and of woes:
These are his wordes, and eke his life,
Whereas he comes or goes.

BALLAD OF THE WANDERING JEW.

ONLY a brief time passed away, ere, to bring me food, the Hebrew again approached the bed on which I was outstretched; and looking upon my face, as methought with great compassion rather than wrath, he took my hand, and gently pressing it, seemed by his penetrating glances, to demand of me if I were observant of his actions. As yet, however, I much doubted whether it would be fitting for me to speak unto him, and knew not in what words to accost him; but whilst I thus mused, he of himself brake silence,

now addressing his speech unto me. "How is it with thee, youth?" said he, "lo, here is food for thee; canst thou now hearken unto my voice, and understand the purport of my words?"

To this I answered, that I could hear him right well, and knew what he had spoken; though natheless I was still doubtfully musing as to what his actions tended, and why I had been brought thither.

"I rejoice," replied he, "that thy remembrance hath so far returned as to make thee curious in this matter. Know, then, that about noon this day, for it is now past even-tide, I found thee bleeding and senseless on the plain of Redmoor, some eleven miles from this place, after the late battle there; whence I brought thee unto my own poor abode."

"To thy home!" exclaimed I, for I was not as yet entirely void of dread touching my safety, "and wherefore was I so brought? for if I read thy visage aright, I am in the power of a Jew!"

"In the *power* of a Jew, sayest thou?" responded Israel, "Holy Jacob! hath then a Jew power, or ought else pertaining unto him in this land which he may verily call his own? If, therefore, to be in the dwelling of a Jew, who hath saved thee from great peril, and perchance, from death, be sorrow, young gentile, then in truth mayest thou deem that woe is thee." He spake this with a mournful sternness, as if much resenting mine incautious speech; upon which, not to anger him farther, I made an effort to

raise me on my couch, and in more courteous terms demanded of him wherefore he had brought me unto his dwelling. It seemed, nevertheless, as if some bitterness of soul were still within him, since he replied somewhat hastily, "Aye, I warrant me, thy Christian spirit, young as thou art, deems that a Jew *can* have no purpose even in saving life, but a foul one. I question not but in thine eyes, his house is like the den of the ravening wolf; and, verily, it is little better, since, hunted like a wild beast wherever the sun of heaven shineth on him, like the creatures of the desert is he forced by the men of thy nation and faith to hide him in dens and caves of the earth. But beast, or even reptile, as a Jew may seem in thine eyes, methinks he might, not without reason, have hoped for some brief respite from scorn, from one whom the hand of his pity hath been stretched out to save."

As he thus accosted me, his voice became so solemn and mournful, that whilst it filled me with reverence it almost called forth my tears; and led me to think within myself, whether, notwithstanding all which I had heard, it might not be possible even for a Jew to feel and act with compassion and benevolence. Upon this I answered, that I had not in truth expressed scorn unto him, nor likened him unto either beast or reptile; but had only questioned as to what might be his intent in bringing me unto his home so far distant, and detaining me there.

"Now, Moses be gracious unto me!" returned the

Rabbi, still with an impatient voice, "I pray thee, youth, to believe, if thou canst, that the doing of good actions even in a Jew, *may* have other than an evil intent. I brought thee hither, as God shall judge between us, because thou couldest not remove thyself from the fearful dangers of plunder or death which did surround thee on every side; and here do I keep thee, for that thy wasted strength and drowsy senses admit not of thy departure. And, yet, Father Abraham! thou most compassionate friend of the wayfarer,—it is for having thus mercifully stepped in between his soul and death, that he deems me no other than a wretch that would imprison or a demon that would destroy!"

Whilst he thus spake, his grieved spirit again enkindled wrath and bitterness in his eyes, which struck new terrors into my soul, from recalling his murderous aspect when I first beheld him bending over my couch: but in a moment afterwards his fierce looks, as before, had suddenly passed away, and albeit his features were still deeply impressed with sorrow, the characters of rage were there no longer. It was, therefore, with a sad yet more tranquil voice, that he continued, "Woe is me, for I am a sinful man! I should not thus have given place unto wrath; nor have forgotten that thou art but an inexperienced youth, who peradventure hast had evil thoughts of our despised and outcast nation poured into thy young

mind, the which wisdom and years have not yet removed. Therefore have I sinned, in suffering mine anger to be kindled against thee, seeing thou art but of tender age; yet the spirit which is bowed down with grief, wherein the arrows of affliction do stick fast, is all too easily put from it's patience. Howbeit, do thou now partake of this food, which of a truth thy fainting strength must greatly want; and whiles thou eatest, as thou seemest to have some knowledge such as older years would not disown, I will relate to thee so much of my past life, as will shew thee the springs of my sorrow and the cause of the bitterness of my soul."

Encouraged by his words I began to partake of the provisions which he had brought me, at the same time giving earnest heed unto his discourse, for my pity and curiosity were now awakened for the sorrowful old Hebrew's story; and I moreover repented me of the discourteous manner in which I had spoken unto him. Rabbi Israel upon this seated himself by the side of my couch, and continued his speech unto me after this manner.

"Peradventure thou mayest have seen or heard it told, from the books of the chronicles of this land, that about an hundred and ninety and five years ago, even in the year 5050, when your First Edward was King over the realm,—that a law was made taking away from our people all 'vantage of lent monies and

pledges, therein called usury,* the which was averred to be to the great evil and disherison of the commonweal, and banishing the Jews out of England. In the twelfth month, even Ab, about the middle thereof, the King gave unto our nation certain passes of safe-conduct, that they might hasten throughout all the land up to London, and there take shipping to go beyond seas; upon which sixteen thousand five hundred and eleven Jews departed from Britain. The grinding laws and Princes under whom they had long lived, had left them but little of their substance to carry hence, but divers of the richest of them embarked themselves, with all their possessions, on board a tall ship of great burthen. When they had hoisted sail and gotten down the Thames river, beyond Queenborough, the master of the ship confederated with divers of his mariners to destroy them and get their inheritance; and to bring it to pass they cast

* The *Statutum de Judaismo*, which took away usury from the Jews, to whom it had always been before confined,—was passed at a Parliament held after the Feasts of St. Hilary, Jan. 13th, and Easter, April 2nd, in the 18th year of the reign of Edward I., 1290; which is the Jewish year mentioned above, according to the computation of the Synagogue, of 3760 years having passed from the Creation to the Birth of Christ. Several of the Monastic Chronicles state that the Jews were banished by this Act. The King's writs of safe-conduct for their travelling to London were dated in July, answering to Ab, the twelfth month of the Hebrew year.

anchor, and rode thereat until the barque at ebb-tide lay upon the dry sands. In farther execution of their most wicked plot, the shipmen then moved our hapless fathers to go forth from the ship and walk with the master on land, which they did. At last, when he marked that the tide was swiftly coming in, he withdrew himself secretly from them and got back to the ship into the which he was drawn up by a cord, as it had been before plotted; whereupon the Jews,—who, knowing not their danger, had not made such speed,—when they perceived the peril they were in, cried aloud for aid and to be taken on board. Howbeit the profane scoffers in the ship mocked them, saying that they ought rather to call upon Moses, who led their fathers through the Red-Sea, and who was well able to deliver them from the raging floods, which within short space arose and swallowed them all!"

"Blessed Virgin!" exclaimed I, in wondrous horror at this history, "and what became of the murtherous mariners?"

"Vengeance suffered them not to live," answered Israel; "for within brief space after, they were taken by your Judges and put to death. In that most foul destruction, youth, perished many of my tribe and kindred; and in especial the wise and pious Rabbi Ben Ezra, of mine own house and lineage, who was a Teacher of the Law to the Jews of England, and had in great honour and favour by his brethren,

so that they prayed him to go in the same ship with the hapless elders of our persecuted people. His beloved wife, Rachel, had departed before him in another barque with her own kindred; both because of the great age and weakness of her father, and also for that she was then with child, and so lacked the aid of women. Both of these ships were bound unto the coast of Spain, as divers others were to France; for in these nations did we hope to find rest from our most bitter persecutions. The first ship got unto her harbour in safety, and Rachel went unto certain of her kindred in Arragon; where dwelt the wise Rabbi Jonah, who wrote a holy book called the Practice of Piety, at the command of the First James, King of that land. She waited many days anxiously looking for the desire of her eyes, and the other elders of scattered Israel, who, alas! were sleeping beneath the deep waters—and felt that sickness of heart, which the Wise Man saith cometh from hope deferred; until the evil tidings came of their foul murther, upon which she suddenly fell into travail, brought forward a son at an untimely birth,—and died! Her child was cared for by the good Rabbi Jonah, and those of her own people with whom she dwelt; and by the blessing of the God of Jacob upon him, he prospered in that land, though he was called Ben Cainan, or the son of one that lamenteth. From him I am the fifth in descent, albeit I am called from the place of my sojourning, Israel of Castile, seeing that I abode in

that kingdom until some two years since, when a new persecution even more pitiless and cruel than any which have oppressed us in England, drove me again unto these shores, which peradventure the remnant of our nation hath quitted for ever."

By these words I perceived that Rabbi Israel signified the late settlement of the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Spain, the fame of which had reached even our remote Monastery of Ely. It was, as I had heard tell, brought into Castile in the Year of our Lord, 1478, by one Thomas Turrecremata, a Dominican, and Prior of the Monastery of the Holy Cross at Segovia; who, in 1483, was also appointed to be Inquisitor-General of the Kingdoms of Castile and Leon, by a Bull from the Holy Father Sixtus IV. All men know that the chief intent of this awful tribunal was to reclaim or put down heretics, but when it was firmly stablished the Jews also were required to become Christians, depart the Kingdom, or die at the stake. Four years were given them for making their hapless choice, after which all persons were prohibited, under divers rigorous penalties, from aiding or communicating with them; and albeit they sought to avoid banishment by paying large sums unto King Ferdinand, when the zealous Turrecremata heard thereof, he went rudely before the King and Queen, and demanded that those outcasts of Israel should forthwith be expulsed the land; adding, withal, that it was a Judas-like act to permit of their stay for

money. The rule of the Holy Office soon spread so widely over the land, that 2,000 heretics were burned, 17,000 became penitents, and a large number fled into divers other nations; though when the whole Jewish people was banished, 170,000 families of 400,000 persons departed from Spain, none of whom might return again upon pain of confiscation or death.

And here I may fitly remember and set down what farther persecutions have since followed these hapless Hebrews, albeit the story belongeth unto a later time than that of which I do now write; for when they were expulsed from Spain in 1492, only a few remaining who were sold for slaves, they turned them unto Portugal, wherein King John II. did permit them to live for a brief and appointed space, so that each Jew paid unto him eight pieces of gold. It was, as I think, in 1496 when they promised to depart his kingdom, but the foul extortion and evil usage which they met from the mariners of those ships wherein they would have embarked, did so affright them, that they deemed it a lesser misfortune to encounter the penalty of over-staying their time, to getting into the hands of such ill-minded men. Thus were they again brought into captivity, so that it was no strange thing for anyone wanting a Jewish servant, to desire him of the King whose bondsmen they were. Howbeit, when Emanuel came unto the crown he restored their liberty, until he was counselled by Ferdinand and Isabella of Castile not to suffer their longer abode in

Portugal, since they were naturally hated both by God and man: in 1497 he therefore put forth an edict that they, and all Moors, should depart by a certain day, or again become slaves. The Moors forthwith went into Africa, but as the Hebrews were making ready to do the like, the King commanded all their children under fourteen years to be forcibly rent from them, and taught the Faith of Christendom. And it was, as I have been certified by one who saw it, a most woeful sight to behold those children torn, even in the streets, from their lamenting fathers and weeping mothers, who were sometimes beaten with clubs ere they could be constrained to part with them.

But now to return again unto the Rabbi Israel's history: he told me that after the Inquisition had begun persecuting the Jews of Castile, they kept themselves more secret, and met for prayers and the services of their Law, at night in the chamber of a decayed house in a remote part of the City of Madrid. They were not, however, unmistrusted, for one Hojeda, a spy, having concealed him in the chamber, beheld certain of their devotions and denounced them unto the cruel Inquisitor-General. The whole of that little synagogue, Rabbi Israel, his wife, and son, being of the number, were therefore put into chains and loathsome prisons; and after long remaining there, they were tortured, despoiled of their goods, and banished the land, whilst others of their brethren were condemned to the flames.

"In Castile," continued the Jew, "I had been wont to deal in the precious stones of Afrike, and having hidden certain of the choicest thereof in the lining of my gaberdine, I travelled hither with a Poland merchant who had licence to bring over a fair ruby for sale, so that he first shewed it unto the King and Queen. With one of my gems I made me an advocate in Mistress Shore, King Edward's concubine, for in her days of power she would speak for men in their suits unto his Grace, and that sometimes for small reward, or none at all; either for that she was content with her mediation itself, when it prospered, or for that she delighted to be sued unto, and shew what she might procure from the King. Howbeit, by her favour, because I was of Spain and well seen in the traffic of that nation, it pleased the King to set me over the customs of divers merchandises sent thither or brought thence. And thus for a short while I prospered, and deemed that my mountain stood strong; but upon her late overthrow after King Edward's death, I also was despoiled, and put forth from mine office with contumely, and fled for my life to certain of my brethren who secretly abide in this place. I had not been here a year, when a far deeper wound was made upon mine afflicted soul; for a little before the next Passover, in the time which you call Lent, when the Gentiles were ever wont to persecute our hapless tribe with blows and curses, the brutal rabble fell upon mine only son, my Benoni,

and stoned him as if he had been a heathen or a blasphemer! Oh, Thou Rock of Ages! never can I cease to sorrow over him, since a fairer and purer being breathed not in all the race of the Faithful! and though many days have passed since that most cruel slaughter was committed even before the eyes of his father, the remembrance of that horrid season remains within this wretched breast, as freshly depicted as though it were but of the age of yesterday."

A deep and frequent sobbing at this most sorrowful part of the Jew's history, caused him to note that the compassionate female who had so calmed his hatred towards me,—had, unmarked, entered the chamber, and seemed heavily afflicted at the sad remembrances now brought unto her mind. Whereupon he arose to comfort her, and tenderly laying his hand upon her arm, said unto her, albeit his voice faltered with sorrow, "Weep not, my beloved Naomi, weep not, mine aged and faithful spouse, our boy now sleepeth sweetly and hath for ever escaped from the weapons of his persecutors, even as the bird flieth out of the net of the fowler. Bethink thee, that the holy God who redeemed Israel from the land of Mizraim, hath also taken him into Paradise from this most evil world, being a soul sealed by Jehovah unto the everlasting Covenant of Abraham. Yea, he hath now gone where the arm of the oppressor is powerless, and the tongue of the scorner is mute; for there, as the holy man of Uz

said of old, the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. Weep not, then, my Naomi, I pray thee, sorrow is not for the happy soul, and thou knowest that the memory of the just is blessed."

"Thou wilt not now marvel," continued he, after a brief pause, again turning his discourse unto me, "that the image of our child, despitefully treated wounded, and bleeding, is ever present unto our thoughts, and that the remembrance of his sufferings should sometimes call forth upon the Gentiles, the bitterness of his father's curse; at which seasons the voice of the Evil One would often whisper me to avenge his blood. Howbeit, I thank the God of Bethel, that his temptations have as yet been only like foul visions, which fly before the beams of the morning, and as grass upon the house-tops, which withereth before it groweth up; even so my unholy thoughts have been cut off ere they sprang up into open sins against His Law.

"But enough of mine own story and sorrows, let us now turn to thine. As I told thee, about noon this day when I passed over the plain near Bosworth, after the overthrow of the host of King Richard,—a name which is held accursed for ever by the children of Israel,*—it was my lot there to find thee,

* The reader will readily perceive that this execration refers to the memorable massacre of the Jews, under Richard I., which commenced at his Coronation-feast in Westminster-hall, on Sunday, September 3rd, 1189, and was afterwards carried on

lying like one of the dead; and because I saw that thine age was that of my slaughtered son, I marked thee more earnestly, and methought thy features had a strong semblance to his. Whilst I thus gazed I beheld thee move, which shewed that the lamp of thy life was yet burning, however dimly, and as I mused within myself whether thou wert strong enough to be borne unto a leech, a motion of more power caused me to deem that the ministrations of Naomi, whose skill in the healing art is not small, might speedily restore thy fainting life. I then laid thee upon mine own mule and brought thee hither; and if by the coming morrow thou shalt find thy limbs strong enough to bear thee hence, thou art at once free to return unto thy kindred, who, if I judge aright from that costly gem upon thine hand, are of high blood and power, notwithstanding the coarseness of thy raiment."

The hapless Hebrew's narrative and his passing great humanity, touched me alike with pity and inward shame, in that I had formed such evil thoughts of my deliverer; and therefore to do him what reparation I might, I silently offered up for him such prayers as the Holy Church hath appointed to be made for Jews and heretics in the Office for Good

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in many country towns, though the most sanguinary scene took place at York. The fullest account of these events is in the History of Walter de Hemingford.

Friday; and also desired of him to forgive the hasty speech which had been called forth by my fears.

"Of that no more," replied he; "we are all open to the Tempter, and our spirits do often too easily yield them to the circumstances of our condition. Go, then, in peace unto thy friends, whenever thou shalt be so minded; and if they be, as I deem, of the great of this land, forget not, shouldest thou ever behold a new persecution kindled against our hapless race, to aid and protect them as God shall give thee power: since but for a Hebrew's pity and succour, thou wouldest, thyself, ere this, have been in the darkness and the dust of death."

I pledged me not to forget his compassion, but my tears now began to flow forth, for that I remembered with great sorrow, the defeat of all my hopes by the death of King Richard; and that I was now friendless and alone in an evil world, and far distant from the quiet cloisters of Ely Monastery, in which until this time I had found a home. My grief was not unmarked by Israel of Castile, though he deemed not truly whence it sprang; for thinking it might arise from his former fierceness of speech and action, he forthwith again assayed to calm my sorrows. He kindly grasped my hand, and bade me prepare joyfully to depart on the morrow, but as I still seemed like one who had little desire for journeying, he deemed that I felt me too weak, and thereupon told me that if it were so, I should tarry with him until my wounds

were healed and my strength returned again. He farther added, that if I would name my kindred, he would seek them out, and carry to them tidings of what had chanced, that they might not vainly sorrow for their son. Howbeit, as my tears continued to flow even faster than before, the aged Hebrew seemed much to marvel that his speech did not comfort my spirit, and thereupon demanded of me wherefore I still wept; desiring that I would plainly tell him the cause of my griefs. At length, being won by his compassionate discourse, I told him that in very truth I had no friends then remaining to whom I might go, since my best and dearest had fallen in that day's battle, which would prove unto me the loss of all worldly hope; and that when I should go forth from his dwelling, I knew not whither to direct my steps, nor how to provide for my future life.

"Alas! poor youth," said the Rabbi, who seemed greatly to pity mine unprotected state, "well said the royal Psalmist that we are strangers and sojourners, as all our fathers were. But, fear thou not," added he, after musing for a short space, "dry up thy tears, and hope for more prosperous days; for though weeping may endure for a night, yet, saith the holy David, joy cometh in the morning. If, therefore, thou wilt consent to lodge with a poor despised Jew, thou shalt be unto me in place of him whom I have lost, to eat of my bread and drink of my cup, until thou mayest discover thine own kindred; for the great Lawgiver

of Israel hath written 'The stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, which are within thy gates, shall come, and shall eat; and be satisfied; that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the work of thine hand, which thou doest.'"

Thus did I find the hospitable spirit which marked the wealthy Hebrews of old, shine forth in two of their most oppressed descendants; for the compassionate and pious Naomi joyfully consented to Israel's charitable purposes, and moreover promised that whiles I continued in their dwelling, she would watch over my welfare as though I had been indeed their son. And all this was in truth duly performed: by her care my hurts were speedily healed, and as my strength came back again, I began to grow taller and more vigorous; whilst the softening hand of Time gradually closed up the deeper wounds of my soul.

In setting forth this part of my life, I have but little to note touching myself, albeit I may speak somewhat concerning the friendly Hebrews. Their household orderings and furniture seemed of small worth, though peradventure this might be that their wealth might not call forth the persecution of such as were ever ready to misuse and despoil those of their faith: but unto me they were ever bountiful of all things, without aught of covetousness; and I would fain believe, that for mine own part, I had nought of ingratitude. The aged Hebrew never once intimated unto me that my maintenance put him to charges

which gave him either concern or trouble; albeit in matters not alike costly, he would shew no little impatience because of their burthen. I sometimes, though vainly, sought to press upon him part of the gold given unto me by King Richard; for he ever refused it, and even repressed the thanks which I would oft essay to pour out unto him with all the warmth and earnestness of youth.

Nor did I only receive food and shelter from the good Jew, but such instruction as he could, he poured into my mind; and he was held with his own nation to be a Rabbi of great wisdom. He taught me the sacred language, and gave me divers choice lessons for a wise and virtuous life, taken from those ancient Hebrew Fathers, who writ the noted books of the Talmud, the Mishnah, the Gemara, and the like; shewing me the true interpretation of their wondrous histories and dark sayings, which the enemies of the Jews have perverted both from ignorance and from malice.

"My son," said he unto me, when I was once offering unto him my thanks for his unwearied and continued goodness, "that which I have now done for thee, shall peradventure be blessed unto me hereafter; even as the life and good deeds of the righteous shall be blessed unto them for ever: the which we are told by our fathers, in a certain ancient parable related by them for the instruction of their children, and called

The Journey of Hillel.

"Rabbi Hillel, of whom thou mayest not have heard, albeit his fame in Israel shall last for ever,—was a wise and holy teacher of our nation in the days of Herod, ill-named the Great. He had always led a pure and virtuous life, resisting many allurements unto evil, though they seemed to lead to wealth and power; and especially did he quell all impatience and wrath, though he was often tempted to anger or hatred. At length it came to pass, that the blessed Rabbi, in a certain journey, drew nigh unto a deep and black river over which he must go; on the banks whereof he beheld a rich and mighty King at the head of a conquering army, with many beauteous women, imprisoned soldiers being led away to death, and exceeding great treasure. Rabbi Hillel then looked behind him, and saw that the road along which they had passed was broad, winding, and full of briers, over fearful rocks, and through dark forests; whilst that which he had trodden was a narrow straight line, through green meadows and groves, which looked the fairer for being seen from that distant spot. He next turned him unto the waters and said, 'Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe! who bringest the sun to his setting, and the traveller unto the end of his journey;' and therewith laying his mantle on the river, he seated himself

upon it, wrapped it around him, and so went safely over. The King and his host were left wondering on the shore, for they had no ships; and anon the waters rose mightily upon them, so that they were all carried down the stream and destroyed!"

"And now, my son," continued Israel, as he made an end of his story, "mark well the secret meaning of these words of the ancient wise. The river was death; the two roads along which the Rabbi looked, were a good and evil life, which shew in their truest form when we are about to quit this world; and the mantle which safely and happily bore him over the waters, was his charity and good works, that covered him like a robe when his soul was unclothed of it's fleshly tabernacle. They pleaded for him with Heaven in that hour, when,—like the evil king and his host,—the rich lose their gold and possessions, the wise man forgets his cunning, the worm feedeth on the cheek of beauty, the sword falls from the hand of the conqueror, and even crowns and sceptres, in the eyes of a dying monarch, become less than nothing and vanity!"

Such, then, I say, were the Hebrew's counsels and conversation; but I may not forget to note, that whilst I was his guest, he never letted me in the devotions of my Faith, nor pressed upon me those of his own, albeit I have oftentimes witnessed his piety and his prayers. His oratory was a small upper chamber, looking to the East, and in part decayed,

to keep in his mind the destruction of the Holy City, which the dwelling of every Jew must in some manner declare; in record whereof there was written in Hebrew upon the ruined wall, "The Memorial of Desolation," with that verse from the saddest of all the Psalms, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem! may my right hand forget her cunning!" But the remembrance of that once-blessed spot, was unto Israel and Naomi not without a touch of joy, from the thought that at the consummation of all things, the children of Abraham shall return to it again in triumph; and it sometimes formed the matter of those ancient songs, with which the good Jewess was wont to cheer me when my spirit was desponding. She chaunted them to the sounds of a psaltery of ivory inlaid with gold, having some ten or twelve strings, wherewith she made marvellous pleasant music; and of these lays, which she also taught unto me, here followeth one, which I have essayed to put into the tongue and metre of our own nation.

A Hebrew Melody.

"Thine heart is sad, thine heart is sad,
And thoughts of sorrow vex thy soul;
But Judah's God can make thee glad
And burst the clouds that round thee roll:
Thy broken spirit shall be whole,
And light and joy arise on thee,
To end thy dark captivity.

For all things own His wondrous sway
In heaven, or earth, or ocean wide;
And sun and shower, and night and day,
Praise Him as their almighty guide;
E'en the cold grave in vain would hide
Our sins and sorrows from His sight
Whose arm is Power,—whose eye is Light!

The sun-blight, and the sickening moon,
And hurtful demons He shall chase;
Then, fear not, since the Lord shall soon
Awake thy tongue to gladsome lays;
Tuning thine heart unto His praise,
And from His treasured blessings shed
A double portion on thy head.

Soon shall the wintry storms be o'er,
And all the floods and rains be past;
The vines shall blush with grapes once more,
And flowers upon the earth be cast:
And for the sad and howling blast,
Our land shall hear the turtle's voice
And the glad time when birds rejoice.

Yes, He hath said the day shall come
When Zion shall in glory reign,
When shouting to their beauteous home
Her scattered tribes shall march again;
When, from the mountain to the plain,
Shall Salem's banner be unfurled,
And David's sceptre—rule the world!"

CHAPTER VI.

HOURS OF IDLENESS AND SORROW.

To me is barr'd the door of joy and ease,
There stand I as an Orphan, lone, forlorn,
And nothing boots me that I frequent knock.
Strange, that on every hand the shower should fall,
And not one cheering drop should reach to me!

WALTER VOGELWEIDE, THE MINNESINGER.

I am treating you as a Roman gentleman did St. Augustine and his mother; I shall entertain you in a Charnel-house:—the sight that St. Augustine most noted in that house of sorrow, was the body of Cæsar, clothed with all the dishonours of corruption, that you can suppose in a six-months' burial.

JEREMY TAYLOR'S RULE OF HOLY DYING.

My wonted strength had now been for some time perfectly restored, yet made I no attempt to quit the dwelling of the christian Hebrew who had so long protected me; albeit my spirit would oftentimes revolt at the remembrance, that the true son and heir of Richard Plantagenet was dependent for food and shelter upon the alms of a stranger Jew. Even the very feeling of his kindness became thus grievous,

yet I knew not how to alter or amend my condition, if I quitted the home which he had so freely accorded unto me; and whilst I thus lingered in uncertain perplexities, the ever-spread wings of Time had still continued on their steady flight. Month after month arrived and fled away, the seasons came on in their order and changed at their appointed hours; and it seemed as if I only remained unaltered and unamended, save in age and stature, the same weak, wavering, and melancholy being, which I was some twelvemonth before in the cloisters of Ely. Nor was I altogether free from fear as to the safety of my present abode, since, from my long dwelling with Israel of Castile, I had sometimes heard myself scornfully named as the Jew's offspring; and the cruel fate of his real son, whom I somewhat resembled, was not forgotten either by myself or in the town of Leicester; for there were dark and hostile menaces abroad, of farther vengeance upon the fugitive Jews who secretly lived there: and whom the baser and fiercer sort had resolved to root out, as a race of beings accursed by God, and therefore to be abhorred by man. I had, also, some fears for Israel, since there were not wanting those, who, rightly deeming me to be a Christian, avouched that the Hebrew detained me in his dwelling for some cruel or evil purpose; so that it seemed unto me but all too likely, that his very charity might at length lead unto his destruction.

The sadness of these thoughts, and the gloomy incertitude which overclouded my future life, tended to make me altogether unlike the youth of my own age, with whom I sometimes consorted in the disports natural to our years; such as drawing the bow, leaping and running, tossing the quoit and bar, and certain other games wherein I engaged, both to avoid sloth and strengthen my body. Yet had I but few seasons for social pastime, and of those few I disregarded some; for when the spirit is not meet for mirth, it will profit us but little to seek for lusty and joyous sports; therefore at such seasons me listed rather to encounter some grave person at Tables, or the Nine Mens' Morris; or that the Hebrew should instruct me in the wise and princely play of the Chess, which men say was brought from Chaldea, or the obscure and thoughtful Philosopher's Game. I also loved greatly to see the sacred Mysteries taken from the Holy Scriptures, or the pleasant Moralities, which were played at Leicester, at the great Feasts of the Church, by certain cunning clerks and religious men, upon high stages richly adorned with wondrous art and rare scenes; wherein you might, as it were, behold the very histories of the blessed book, or. the foulness of vice and the excellency of piety, depicted unto the life in most choice counterfeit and action. But most specially did I delight in the solitary and thoughtful art of fishing with an angle, in the Soar River, beneath the walls of Leicester

Abbey; which seemed the more meet unto me, because it was a disport permitted unto churchmen, to whom the pastimes of hunting and hawking were altogether forbidden. And in the pursuit of this most gentle art, I have since read, with much care, the little tome, which Dame Juliana Berners, the wise Prioress of Sopewell Abbey, near St. Alban's, did put forth of *Hawking, Hunting, Fishing, and the Blazing of Coat-Armours.** Of the which I have ever found her pleasant words to be most true, in that she saith, the Angler hath his wholesome walk and merry at his ease, enjoying the sweet savour of the mead-flowers, hearing the melodious harmony of fowls, and seeing the young swans and other water-birds, with their broods; the which in sooth seemed unto me better than all the noise of hounds, blasts of horns, and scrye of fowls, that hunters, falconers, or fowlers, could ever devise. I loved this pastime, also, because, as she well noteth, whiles it is a solace unto the body, it is healthful to the soul; seeing that it is best pursued in loneliness, when we may serve God duly with our accustomed prayers, and so eschew and avoid many vices. Such, then, being my wonted disports, in the games of the rude and vulgar of my young

* The Book of St. Alban's, which contained the treatises mentioned above, was originally printed in 1486; but the tract on Angling was not inserted until 1496, in the edition published by Wynkyn de Worde.

days, such as "Hand-in-and-hand-out," "White and Black," "Making and Marring," "Muzzle the Pig," and divers others,—I had but little skill and less liking. And not seldom laying aside my pastimes altogether, it hath more contented me to walk in the quiet and solitary church-yard; where it much soothed my spirit to know that they who were once as restless and anxious as I then was, were laid at rest serenely and for ever: and I read also upon the tombs of the departed, that whether the evils which beset this life be small or great, brief must ever be the time of their duration.

But of all those solemn scenes, I did chiefly take a mournful delight in going unto the Monastery of the Grey-Friars, now overthrown, but which once stood near St. Mary's Gate in the south wall of Leicester. A long square of buildings girdled in a *Viridarium*, or garden, containing a fair green sward, planted with wholesome herbs, trees, and flowers; wherein the Franciscan brethren were wont to delve for two hours after *Prime*, and the sick walked to get health from the pure air and the smell of the fresh plants. Howbeit, though I sometimes lingered in that fair spot, I went most unto the Church of the Monastery, there to muse over the low and dishonourable grave, wherein had been laid all that was mortal of my brave and royal father. By the side of his narrow sepulchre, I would oft recall with much sorrow, my first and last memorable interview with

him ; when his dark and lustrous eyes, now closed for ever, were turned upon me with wondrous gentleness and affection, albeit they flashed upon the enemy with a soldier's dreadful glances. I thought upon the amaze with which I had looked upon the brightness of his array, when he was making him ready for the fight, and then came the remembrance that his brave arm, which swept away all before it, was now held down by the cold grasp of the mightiest of conquerors ; whiles his stout and regal harness was exchanged for a coarse winding-sheet, and a narrow coffin of stone. Then, also, with such sorrow as no wit of mine can ever truly pourtray, I bethought me of him in the battle, when I saw him encompassed by a host of timorous foes, struggling like a lion in the toils, and yielding only in death, after the most noble efforts at victory and vengeance. Nor could I then forget what had of late been told unto me, of the contumely which, as I have afore said, was cast upon his corse by the haughty victor, who could find an unworthy joy in his base and unhallowed revenge, although the most dishonour recoiled upon his own head. I say, therefore, that when I remembered me of all this, I was sad, very sad ; yet, as the good Sir Launcelot Du Lake said of old touching the valiant and famous King Arthur, " I trust that herein I did not displease God, for he knew well mine intent, that my sorrow was not for sin, but because I deemed it might never have an end. For when I remembered

and called to mind the excellence, bounty, and nobleness, that were with the King; and also when I saw the corse of that stately King so lie in that cold grave made of earth, that sometime was so highly set in most honourable place, truly mine heart would not serve to sustain my wretched and careful body."

Thus full of sorrow did I oft-times muse around his resting-place about the close of day, and even after, if the good Porter or Sacristan of the Franciscan Monastery did not bid me forth for an idle youth, who vainly loitered away his hours in that place. For as I lingered there, I did secretly wish that since it had been denied unto King Richard to remain with me in life, it might ere long be given unto me to join him again in death; till when I found a mournful joy in being near his sepulchre. It fell upon a certain eventide, some twelve months or more after my arrival at Leicester, when I was thus musing and silently weeping, and intreating of Heaven to bestow upon me the desire of my heart,—that a Stranger accosted me, and with no uncourteous greeting demanded why I tarried in the Church so late. To this I replied, that "I loved to pause in a place so holy and solemn; and to think, that as some of those who rested there had peradventure once lived in sorrow, even so the spirits which were then afflicted, should, at the last, find an unbroken quiet in the tomb."

"Gramercy for thy homily, young clerk," exclaimed he who had addressed me, "for thou must

be either priest or philosopher to talk me thus wisely with such green years as thine seem to be. But I trow, boy, that thou hast learned the starling's art thus early; and only repeatest that which some holy father hath spoken in thine hearing."

I then answered him that I had no such mimicry, and that what I had uttered, such as it might be, was in very truth my own.

"Nay, stripling," responded he, "jape not with me, nor take my words in dudgeon, it is enow that thou sayest over thy lesson rightly; since to look for more, or that thou shouldest feel thus, were indeed but stark unreason."

"It skills not unto thee," answered I, somewhat angered at the Stranger's words, "whether I do indeed feel thus, or not; and yet, peradventure, if my cause of woe were known, he who now replies unto my sorrows with a jest, might pity, if not befriend me." Holding it to be at the least irreverent for me to dispute longer in that holy pile over my father's tomb, I turned me to depart without looking upon the Stranger; for as he was standing in the deepest shadow of the chancel, it would have been wonderful had I noted his features. But upon my visage fell the little light that now gleamed through the great Eastern window, before which I had been directly standing; so that as I turned, the unknown person caught me by the arm, and said "Nay, hold thee awhile, my forward youth, methinks this is not the

first time thou and I have been in this town together. Thy face seems well known to me, and not less thy passing ready speech:"—then, after looking at me more closely, he exclaimed, "by St. Mary of Leicester! it is as I thought, and thy being upon this spot doth confirm it:" to which he added, again accosting me, "when thou wert a much smaller imp than thou art now, I deem that it was more than once my task to take thee from the school of Ely Monastery to a certain stately palace in London. Howbeit, if I guess aright, thou wilt better know that, little more than a year past, I carried thee to one whom thou never canst forget, although thou wilt never look upon him again. That thou art the same stripling, truly I cannot doubt, albeit thou art now taller in stature and stouter in limb; but since I find thee here by the mouldering bones of him to whom I conveyed thee, I will call thee——" and here he lowered his voice almost to a whisper,—"Richard Plantagenet!"

At these words I sprang towards the Stranger, at once remembering his brief and bold speech, and marking somewhat of the visage of the noble Knight, who guided me unto the pavilion of King Richard on the eve of his last fatal battle. Upon this I demanded of him if he were not Sir Gilbert De Mountford, to which he replied that such was indeed his name; but adding that the place wherein we stood was all unfitting for the conference he would fain have with me, we quitted the Church of the Grey-Friars together.

CHAPTER VII.

A LEGEND OF LEICESTER, AN ASSAULT ON THE JEWS, AND THE PICTURE OF A CASTELLAN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

Her haggard face was foul to see,
Her mouth unmeet a mouth to be,
Her eyne of deadly leer;
She nought devised but neighbours ill,
She wreak'd on all her wayward will,
And marr'd all goodly cheer.

HARRINGTON'S WITCH OF WOKEY.

The rumour quickly spreading itself into the City, the populace, believing they should do the King a pleasure, immediately broke open the Jews' houses, and murdered every one they could meet with; not confining their rage to their persons, but destroying likewise their habitations with fire. Happy were they who could find a true friend to shelter them.

TOVEY'S ANGLIA JUDIAGA.

It may well be supposed by the future reader of this my story, that I was indeed right glad again to encounter my former guardian, unto whom all England gave the praise of a brave soldier and most worthy Knight; though I did chiefly honour him because I deemed him a relique of King Richard, who had ere-

while held him in great trust and favour. As we went out of the Monastery, I learned that he was now Constable, or Castellan, of Leicester Castle; unto which he courteously invited me to go with him, that we might for awhile discourse together at more freedom, whereto I consented with little persuasion.

Forth, then, we went, and after passing along the Roman wall of the Town, by St. Mary's Gate and Church, I noted, with some marvel, that instead of going directly unto the Castle, my guide silently led me round it on the South side, approaching the banks of the Old Soar river; wherein were shining the bright visage of a full moon, and hosts of little stars like golden lamps in the night-skies. We now drew nigh the dwelling of the Austin-Friars, and that wondrous Bridge called "the Bow;" because, like one that is bent for shooting, it stretches across the flood with a broad and single arch. We forthwith ascended it's high and steep passage, which hath but a short defensive wall to guard the traveller who crosses it; and never shall I forget that as we walked over it, the Knight suddenly paused, and willed me to look earnestly upon one of it's rude and broken stones, bearing divers dark stains, which stood there on one side, and might be somewhat higher than a man's knee.

"To behold that fatal stone," said Sir Gilbert, "have I brought thee first unto this place; view it well, and mark what I am about to relate unto thee. Over this

Bridge rode King Richard, high of heart and stout of stomach, what time he followed his army unto his last encampment at Stapleton, whence he never returned with life. As he drew near to this stone, a woman, lorty as the tallest spearman in our host, of wild swarthy visage, with black hair hanging in unkembed elf-locks, and red tattered garments, suddenly started up before him, and demanded of him a gold Angel, that she might bless his march to battle. Whereupon the King, ill brooking that delay, seeing that his soul was enwrapped in the coming fight and flushed with the hope of victory, hastily commanded her from his path; but in urging forward his plunging charger, his spur struck so violently upon that stone, that sparks flashed from it, as the gilded steel smote against it. Of this, however, I, who followed behind, took little note, but the Witch-woman,—for such I verily deem her to have been,—then uttered a wild cry of laughter, and said in a voice of mockery, 'Ride on, Sir King! thou goest forth with a full brave train, but thou wilt return with a greater; and so an thou wilt not buy my blessing, thou shalt bear my ban free of cost! Ride on, Sir King! the foot hath but stricken to-day, what the head shall dash against to-morrow! for as surely as ever the fire flashed betwixt thy spur and that stone, so surely shall thy blood flow over it when thou next smitest it, and many here shall behold it! Ride on, Sir King! thy coin is now little to me, but less unto thyself: Ride on, Sir King! we have met,—

and we have parted!' and with these words she hastily strode over the Bridge, and eftsoons disappeared!"

"It was not my fortune," continued Sir Gilbert, "to witness the fulfilment of this prophesy, which I soon forgot in the thousand hasty acts of making ready for battle; but when some days had fled after the fatal conflict, as I again crossed this Bridge at more leisure, I marked the same stone then all stained with blood, whilst a gaping crowd, which was still loitering round it, affirmed that it had been so marred by the head of King Richard dashing against it, as in foul array his corse was brought back to Leicester. Then remembered I what the Witch-woman had said; and for the truth of what those rude artisans had reported to me, both Sir Rice Ap Thomas and Sir John Imberville did afterward most solemnly avouch!"

We now left that fatal spot and returned unto Leicester Castle, where Sir Gilbert De Mountford dwelled in those fair and spacious lodgings, erected by the stout John of Gaunt on the North-west side of the fortress, next unto St. Mary's Church. Here we retired into a chamber beyond the hall, wainscoted with oak, strewed with rushes, hung with tapestry, and lighted by a brazen cresset which was pendent from the roof; and whilst the Castellan regaled me with a cup of Rochelle wine and a salver of simnel-cakes, we discoursed more at large concerning King Richard, of whose history he told me divers memorable passages. I also briefly recounted unto the Knight

my fortunes since I last beheld him, telling him withal of my present abode, and much lauding the humanity of Israel, my preserver; in the hope that Sir Gilbert would find both the will and power to shew him some favour. When I had ended my own story, he straightway told me that the secret of my birth had been long since entrusted to him by King Richard; in accordance with whose commands he first carried me to St. Mary's Monastery at Ely, to be bred up and instructed, strictly enjoining the Lord Prior, Roger Walkelyn of Westminster, to inform him from time to time touching my well-being, that he might faithfully discharge his service unto his noble lord. He moreover told me, that he had divers times taken me, when but of tender years, unto Crosby-house in London, also by command of the Duke of Gloucester, before he was Sovereign, in the reign of King Edward the Fourth; the which interviews were both secret and very brief, arising from my father's affection for his unavowed offspring. The Knight added, too, that after the late battle he had caused a diligent, though vain, search to be made for me, whereupon he concluded that I must have been slain; which he deemed but all too likely, from my rash desire to behold the conflict too nearly.

And now I began much to marvel, that one, who seemed ever to have been constant unto King Richard, should be as high in the trust and favour of his direst foe, who had prevailed over him in fight, and had

even seized upon his crown. Nor could I withhold me from uttering unto him my notion thereof, as thinking it, in my poor wit, to be an act having some touch of dishonour; unto which, however, he freely and straitly replied after this manner.—"I deem it, youth, to be the part of the good soldier, ever to prove faithful unto his King whiles he liveth, but when he dies, so doth the subject's allegiance; and his duty then belongeth unto his successor, unless the Sovereign leave no true issue, when the nation claims the bestowal of the crown. King Richard,—unto whose soul may God be gracious!—had no son save thee, whom I well thought was slain: but had I known thou wert living, I should have done thee small service by proclaiming thee as such, or by unfolding what had been so long hidden; for of a surety it had been much distrusted, and had put thy life into foul jeopardy. Farther than this, too, I know nought of thy mother; and therefore any act of mine to declare thee as King Richard's heir, would be but to stamp bastardy upon thy birth, which I deem to be pure, and would questionless awaken the hatred and wrath of King Henry. Trust me, therefore, good youth, that thy better part is silence; and thy safest station obscurity: and, so far as my power reaches, I will be thy protector and guardian, for the sake of him from whom thou art descended."

Here I interposed by giving him many thanks, and saying, that in speaking my poor thoughts I had not

referred unto mine own claim upon the crown, having long since awakened from all such dreams of ambition, but that I enquired only touching his own actions with Harry Tudor.

"And touching mine own acts with Harry Tudor," repeated Sir Gilbert, with a somewhat impassioned voice, as if slightly angered,—"for I did well mark thy doubts thereof; but the name of De Mountford must never be enlinked with aught of dishonour. The fight was scarcely over,—certes the blood had not dried upon our swords, and I wot well that both hosts were still panting with the heat of battle,—when Sir Reginald Bray brought forth the crownet of thy father's helmet, Lord Stanley set it upon Richmond's head, and the shouting armies forthwith hailed him as King. Nor was this all, for the voice of England itself, in brief space after, confirmed this hasty election;* and 'twas not for me to stand forth alone in the camp and the nation, and, denying the act of both, vainly to snatch at his crown, or refuse him mine allegiance. I had no other King to follow, and therefore in pure faith I took service with him; for the wont of my House hath ever been to fight for the crown, and by the might of God, I will do it, though it be set upon a hedge-stake!

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* King Henry VII. was crowned for the first time at Westminster by Cardinal Thomas Bourchier, Archbishop of Canterbury, on Sunday, October 30th, 1485.

"Matters being thus," continued the honest Castellan, in somewhat more tranquil a voice, "many other loyal and right good servants of King Richard did as I, without stain unto their duty; and I thank his Grace that now is,—for so must I call him,—he received us with fair bounty, saying that as he well knew I had been true unto my late lord until he deceased, he would never doubt to trust me whiles he should live and reign. In token of which confidence, a short while after he sent me a patent under his broad seal, making me Constable of this Castle of Leicester; whereof some two hundred years past mine ancestors were the stout Earls, as you may read in the ancient chronicles of this realm, and look upon their tombs in yonder Abbey."

Yet, notwithstanding this discourse of Sir Gilbert's, it still seemed unto me, who, it should be remembered, was but of few years and small wisdom,—somewhat strange that he who had risen and flourished in the favour of my father, should now live not less greatly under the very usurper by whom the true King had been slain. Howbeit, I have since known many men who have been esteemed both valiant, wise, and honourable, who have nothing scrupled to do the same act under the like changes of fortune; and have sought first to establish their own advancement, little recking what became of their fidelity. But though mine experience had not at this time armed me with such reasons for the governance of

my thoughts, as after years have supplied unto me, yet, was I not, albeit only a very youth, so unskilled in worldly prudence, as to blight all my hopes of future favour from the Castellan by farther objecting his inconstancy in taking office and reward under the Earl of Richmond; but contrariwise, when he continued to speak to me with much kindness, I replied unto him with courteous words and many thanks.

Thus remained we in discourse, until the bell of the Castle-chapel tolled midnight; for, listening with anxious ear unto his speech, I had forgotten all else, and marked not how the hours had fled away: but then I arose in haste to depart, since it was but a short distance from the Castle to the ancient Jewry-Wall near St. Nicholas' Church, where Israel of Castile secretly resided, in one of those dark and miserable vaults which were the former dwellings of the Jews in Leicester. But now the fortress was shut for the night, and Sir Gilbert would in no case permit me to go forth; and although I had some misgivings that my delay would affright my Hebrew protectors, yet was I forced to yield me unto his commands, and betake me to the chamber wherein he had ordered me to be bestowed. It was a fair, yet small room of carved wood, in a gallery above the great hall of the Castle, vaulted with stone arches, and strewed with fresh rushes from the banks of the Soar: 'broidered hangings, though somewhat decayed, decked the walls and bed, and in a narrow niche were set a little

image of the Blessed Virgin and her Son, a desk with a book of Offices, and a stand for a lamp. In the tall and high window the arms of John of Gaunt were curiously wrought in divers-coloured glass; and upon looking forth from it, I might see the pleasant bowers and green-swards of the Castle-garden, with an ancient stone summer-house, and the embattled walls of the inner-bailey.

Albeit the days of which I do now speak have long ago passed away, yet have I oft-times since felt the sorrow of a wounded conscience, when I have brought to mind the blameful weakness which did stay me from departing early on the morrow unto the good Hebrews, Israel and Naomi, to make known to them the fair fortune which had befallen me. Howbeit, I may note this in mine own defence, that I might not go forth when I would; although I deny not that the state in which I now lived, and the goodly train of ready serving-men and soldiers which waited on me and courted me on all sides to divers pastimes, so dazzled my boyish sight and captured mine imperfect wit, that I put off from hour to hour my return unto the Jews' house, until three days had wholly departed. But then I would be letted of my purpose no longer, but sought with all speed to redeem my fault; and hastened forth unto the Wall of the Jewry.

Upon drawing nigh unto that spot, however, as I passed up the High-cross street of Leicester, I heard a wild uproar, and beheld crowds of the baser people

all in tumult, and wondrously disordered at somewhat which had but newly chanced there. I marvelled much as to what it might be, though I had but brief space for doubt, since it was speedily told me on all sides, that some vile Jews had been assaulted by the townsfolk, despoiled of the wealth which they had secretly gathered to the great damage of Christian men, and themselves cast forth and foully misused; all which it was said was only befitting such unbelieving usurers. Whilst I listened unto these reports in great affright, others of the lewd rabble passed by me bearing part of the goods plundered from the Hebrews; of the which I too soon discovered, divers things that I well knew had belonged unto mine innocent protectors! In the hands of one were Naomi's psaltery, and a most choice molten mirror, such as the ancient Israelites used in Egypt and Canaan,* lustrous-

* The use of these metallic mirrors by the Jews appears to have been of very high antiquity, and they are expressly mentioned in four places in the Holy Scriptures; the earliest being Job xxxvii. 18. about 1520 years B. C. "Hast thou spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking-glass?" This is explained as alluding to the steel mirrors of the East, which are convex, and of the brilliant deep blue colour of an Arabian sky. The other passages will be found in Exodus xxxviii. 8. B. C. 1491, where the mirrors are supposed to be of copper or brass, or a mixed metal of silver and copper; Ecclesiasticus xii. 11. B. C. about 200; and the Wisdom of Solomon vii. 26, which was probably written after the Christian Era. There is a curious application of the ex-

ly and most fairly planished; which I did ever think gave back the visage more true and life-like than it can be shown by the noted glasses of Venice, which are in these days held in so much greater repute; for this was formed of real Castilian steel, and better metal there might not be known. Could I now have doubted that my benefactors were indeed some of those who had thus been assailed, knowing this to be the very mirror which they so much prized, and upon which I had so often looked;—yet might I question it no longer when I beheld in the hands of another ruffian, that ancient Hebrew roll of the holy Prophet Esay, of the which I have afore spoken, with it's goodly embroidered cover. He carried also the very rosary and fair illumined missal, which the charitable Jew had provided for my devotion and comfort, whilst my body lay bowed down by my wounds and sick-

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treme hardness and power of reflection of these mirrors noticed in the text, in Gascoigne's satirical poem entitled "The Steele Glass," published in 1576, which is one of the oldest specimens of English blank-verse. The use of metal for mirrors appears to have been first superseded by that of glass, in the thirteenth century, though it continued common in France for a hundred years more; and until the improvement of glass-houses about the end of the seventeenth century, the Venetian mirrors were sold all over Europe and the East Indies. In the Privy Purse Expenses of Henry VIII., September 11th, 1532, the King paid to a Frenchman who brought him looking-glasses and dart-heads, the sum of £4. 13s. 4d.

ness; for, albeit he knew well that I abhorred his unbelief as he did mine, yet, as I have said, he hindered me not in my way of worship, trusting that God would both pardon and prosper him, who was his servant in spirit and in truth.

With two gold Nobles out of my royal father's purse and coinage, I redeemed these few things of the riotous crew which was bearing them away; but all that my fears could whisper of what might have befallen Israel and his aged partner, speedily proved to be indeed the truth. My sorrow for their despiteful persecution was, however, soon much increased, from a rumour which spread through the town, that the chief cause of their cruel treatment, was a belief that one of the Hebrews had drawn away a Christian boy to become a Jew and renounce his Saviour! and that when the fierce multitude searched his dwelling and found not me, to whom this false accusation did refer,—it was declared that he had slain me because I had refused to profane the cross of Christ. Of all that the hapless Hebrew could allege in his defence, the wild multitude would hear nothing; and every incidence, which, rightly measured, should have proved his innocency, only made the more against him, from their warped judgements and evil thoughts of his tribe and nation.

In vain, therefore, did I now seek the lowly dwelling upon the Jewry-Wall, wherein I had found so ready a shelter; since upon the spot where it stood,

was to be seen nought save burned and blackened ashes, wild ruin, and spoliation. And though I forthwith hastened unto all the wonted haunts of my benefactor, yet might I no-where behold him, nor even hear whither he had gone, that I might have sought him out and poured my tears over his all-unmerited woes, of which I, alas! had been the hapless cause. I, therefore, at length put an end unto my wanderings by returning unto the Castle in much weariness and disappointment; and sorrowfully gave up farther quest, inasmuch as I knew not whither else to direct my steps. I wept and mourned heavily for many days, for that I could not find my Hebrew friends to console them; insomuch that Sir Gilbert De Mountford would sometimes blame my too great sorrow in lamenting them, because they were only of mean rank and Jewish unbelievers. Yet so often as I passed through Leicester, I failed not to renew mine enquiries after them, albeit I prospered not beyond this; that I made it plain unto many, that I was indeed the youth who was falsely believed to have been maltreated and slain. For at the first I was not known of the townsfolk, because of the fair attire in which the good Castellan had clothed me; since he deemed my former coarse black habit all unbefitting one, whose father was a King, and whose guardian was the Constable of Leicester Castle.

I pass over, though truly I can never forget, the soothing words which were addressed unto me by Sir

Gilbert and his most excellent Lady, Isabel; an heiress of the noble house of that famous William Marshall, Earl of Pembroke, who remained constant unto King John, when almost all the Peers of England were in arms against him, as may be seen in the goodly History of Matthew of Paris. Under their protection and instruction, I did gradually forget much of my sorrow and former mood of melancholy, and betook me heartily unto the duties, studies, and pastimes, which were now assigned unto me through the next eight months; whereby my mind and body were greatly strengthened and adorned, and my manners made gentle and courteous befitting my birth. To attain unto these ends, I again returned unto my book-learning under Father Ranulphus, the Castle-Chaplain, and also became Page unto Sir Gilbert De Mountford; who had me taught to carve in the banquet and dance in the masque, to ride and bear the spear, wield the sword, run at the ring and quintain, to hunt and hawk, wear armour, draw a six-feet bow with a stout arm, and send a bolt five-score yards straight to the mark.

During mine abode here, which I have ever deemed to be a most joyous part of my life, I was wont to range through the wide Castle of Leicester, and learned to know the names and import of all it's many bulwarks and chambers, with their several uses in times of war. Thus, I marked it's broad walls, loopholes, and embrasures, for withstanding assaults

and shooting forth arrows and heavy missiles; I noted the deep fosse which girdled in the whole fortress; it's strong barbican-gate, turrets, and drawbridge; it's fair outer-bailey and chapel; and it's inner-bailey encompassing the garden, rooms of state, and the tall keep and dungeon, wherein was to be found it's chiefest strength.

Here, then, I sojourned until about the beginning of June, in the year 1487; when I remember that one morning a Pursuivant, habited in a livery of green and white, with the badge of a red dragon upon his back and breast, arrived at the Castle, and delivered unto Sir Gilbert De Mountford this Letter of Summons, fairly writ upon parchment, tied with a silken cord and bearing a seal; receiving from him free entertainment and a Royal of gold for his pains.

"By the King.

HENRY R.

Trusty and right welbeloved, We grete you wele, and in asmoche as We have tydings that certaine rebelles have entered on the xxivth daye of this moneth in our land of Irland, with a fayned boye, sent by the grete malice of the ladye Margarete of Burgoigne, surmising him to be the son of the Duc of Clarence, accompanyed by th' Erle of Lincoln, the Lord Lovel, and a grete multitude of savage Irisshemen and Almaynes;—and for that there be, even in this Our Royaume of England, divers personnes wel-affected

to them and enemyes unto Us. We wold have your advis and counsaile in suche matters as We have to do for the subduying of these Our rebelles. Wee therefore praie you to make all delegens to come unto Us at Our Palace of Westmynster, immedyatelye after syght hereoff, to know Our farther mynde and pleasure: and of this faile ye not as Wee do specyallye truste you. Given under Our Signet at Our Manoir of Shene, this viijth. daye of June, in the second yere of Our reigne.

To Our trustye and right welbeloved Knyght, Sir Gilbert De Mountford, Constable of Our Castle of Leicester, Our Counsaillour: These with speede."

It was not without much doubt and misgiving, that the Knight received this sudden and absolute summons unto the King's presence; for that he greatly feared some evil tongue had spoken of him as well-affected towards the rebels in Ireland, and the counterfeit Earl of Warwick. But to speak Heaven's pure truth I never heard worse than this uttered by him, that "were he certified that the real son of George of Clarence, were in arms, he would draw no sword against him, but would rather go to him and offer him his allegiance; since he had followed Henry Tudor only because he knew of no better Prince." Howbeit, this was no doubt matter enough for suspicion and question, and I ween it was carried to the Court by

a certain soldier, who feigned to be a foreigner, and spake but little and corrupt English; for that having been sent unto London with certain letters of weight as the most incurious messenger, he was taken into Henry's own service and never returned.

Nevertheless, Sir Gilbert might not withstand the King's Letter of Summons without much farther danger, and therefore taking me with him, we set out from Leicester with goodly array and all speed; so that in three days from the time of our departure, we entered London, and for the first time in my life, I gazed upon that most ancient and stately of Cities.

CHAPTER VIII.

LONDON IN 1487—PROSCRIPTION OF THE HOUSE OF YORK.

Of the noblest Cities of the world which Fame doth celebrate, that of London is the one principal seat of the Kingdom of England; whose renown is spread abroad very far, yet she transporteth her products and her commerce much farther. Happy is she in the healthfulness of her air, in the Christian Religion, in her munition and strength, the nature of her situation, the honour of her Citizens, and the virtue of her matrons; very pleasant in her sports and pastimes, and replenished with honourable personages.

FITZ-STEPHEN'S DESCRIPTION OF LONDON.

The root of all was the discountenancing of the House of York, which the general body of the realm still affected. This did alienate the hearts of the subjects from him daily more and more.

LORD BACON'S HISTORY OF HENRY VII.

IT is not my purpose to recount in this little tome, the many marvels which my young eyes noted at my first entering London, after we had passed through the fair town of Iseldon; which standeth nigh thereunto, in a wondrous pleasant country and healthful air, whence we approached the Northern boundaries of the City. Certain others, more cunning clerks

than I, have better writ of these matters; and especially one of late times, a choice Latin Poet, and perfect scholar, whom none have ever equalled in his deep enquiries into the antiquity of this City and Kingdom, whose books and learning shall questionless remain as the most undoubted monuments unto distant ages.*

We passed along divers broad ways made through certain fields, to the vill of Old-bourne, on the North banks of a clear little water, which flows into a wider stream called the Fleet, because it runneth with a swift current; wherein I saw divers barques laden with fuel, corn, fish, or other merchandise, floated up unto the very doors and wharfs of the inhabitants of those parts, unto their great and singular commodity. Across this channel, which cometh from the Thames at the Black Friars, stretcheth a fair stone bridge; and, as we rode slowly over it, and I looked around me with some wonder, I demanded of Sir Gilbert De Mountford what stream that might be.

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* The person here referred to is evidently the famous Antiquary, John Leland, who, in 1533, made a literary and antiquarian tour of England, of amazing minuteness and research, by virtue of a commission from Henry VIII. He also made large collections for a history of London, which it was his intention to have published, but before it was completed he died in a state of mental derangement, April 18th, 1552; after which several of his papers were printed by Stow, the remainder being lost and never recovered.

Unto which he answered, "This water, good Richard, is now the head of Fleet, though it was once of more high repute and called the River of the Wells; for story saith, that in the First Edward's days it was broad and deep enough to bear some ten or twelve tall ships with all their lading, which might safely ride at this bridge. But, truth to say, 'tis now little better than a foul moat or dyke, to girdle in London, by reason of it's wasted waters, which are drawn off by mills, it's channels also being narrowed by wharfs, so that it's name of river passed away, and 'twas then called Tremill, or Turnmill brook; but though it's course hath been somewhat amended again, yet hath it never been restored unto it's ancient breadth and depth: the which debasement may well figure forth the fortunes of some men of high birth brought down to low estate."

And as he spake, methought it did indeed excellently well express mine own lot, since the full tide of honour, which, for a few brief hours, once floated my brave and richly-laden hopes, had now shrunken up into a narrow channel, of small spring and uncertain supply. Yet did I reflect also, that however debased those waters might be in the esteem of men, they nevertheless flowed in onward course to the Thames, and thence unto the broad sea: and even so, methought, let me stand as I may in worldly honour, I shall at length pass "unto the house appointed for all living," "with Kings who had gold, and Princes

who made desolate places for themselves;" whilst mine undying part shall pass away from that earthy darkness, unto it's future home in the boundless ocean of Eternity.

But whiles we lingered thus at the Fleet river, Time, which loitereth never, was hastening the day towards it's close; albeit there was still light enough me to feast my roving sight, upon scenes which unto me were both new and wondrous. From the bridge we went along the field-pathway to the West of Old-bourne, and drew nigh the fair Church of St. Andrew, and the Hospitium of Master Thaive, belonging thereunto; after which we continued down a green road, with some few homely cotters' houses, which I afterwards learned to know right well as Sho-Lane, whence we came unto the famous and stately highway called Fleet-street, because it crossed over that river by another bridge of stone at Ludgate. Yet, though this road hath ever been the main passage betwixt Westminster and the City of London, it was not, at the time of which I write, so well provided of shops and dwellings, as it hath come to be in these later days. It was at least some twenty feet wide, though much of it on the North was indeed open country places, pasture-fields, marshes, or gardens trimly ordered; but it nevertheless did contain many fair houses, curiously builded after a gorgeous and gallant sort, with three storeys one over another! albeit the excellency of the frames now made, far sur-

passeth the finest of the old. The doors closed with two leaves, and the outsides of the walls next the street were either of pale foreign bricks, hard flint, or white plaster fashioned into panels betwixt the timbers, and the inner parts were well strengthened with wainscot-work; the windows being often glazed with glass in the most costly wise, although some had only fine linen dipped in oil or amber, to keep out the wind and let in the light. The shops of this place seemed unto me also many and stately, as the Milliners, which sold the gay daggers, ouches, girdles, and other wares of Milan; the Clothworkers, which had woollens of divers colours hung in their windows; the Goldsmiths, which set forth store of rich plate; and a world of other trades, each being known by some sign or device, rarely sculptured or pencilled above the dwellings, whiles the owners themselves stood at their doors, tempting the passengers with many words to become their customers.

So passed we along, through a lofty embattled gate with square towers, built of grey stone and called Temple-bar, because it standeth nigh a fair Inn which of old belonged unto the Knights-Templars. This led us unto the Strand, a country road, paved but in part, and often of bad passage, bounded by many fields and gardens, in which appeared the stately houses erected by the nobles and gentry; both to be out of the turmoil of the City, enjoy the pleasant air of the river by which they stood, and it's opposite

green banks whereunto they looked, and to be near the Court and Palace of Westminster. Then came we to the village of Charing, where I beheld that carved wooden Funeral-cross where rested the hearse of Eleanor of Castile; which leaving behind us, with the Mews for the King's falcons, we passed the Palace of the Lord Archbishop of York, standing in wide and pleasant gardens by the river, and joining unto the verge of the Court and City of Westminster.

"Within that King-like pile," said the Castellan unto me in a low voice as we approached this spot, "within those walls, Richard, sometime dwelt thy father;" and truly the sight of that royal seat, encompassing, as it seemed, so many stately halls, and chambers, did awaken in my soul the sorrowful feelings of blighted greatness, and I asked of Sir Gilbert De Mountford to point out unto me the very lodging in which King Richard had been wont to rest. The Knight, however, hastily repressed my lofty speech, and told me that as I wished to 'scape danger, I must in no wise use such words, since 'twould be deemed little less than treason to call my father Richard, King; his claim unto the crown having been denied and set aside by the Parliament, so that if I would not place me in great jeopardy, I must be content to speak of him but as Duke of Gloucester.

I would fain have made some reply, but Sir Gilbert told me that for such discourse we must take another time and place; willing me rather to note on either

hand of me the stately Hall of Westminster, the most royal banquetting-house in the realm, and the ancient and venerable Abbey, wherein so many Sovereigns had been crowned in their lives, and sepultured after their deaths. "Here, then," said he, "you may well guess, that we are in the very midst of King Henry's friends, where speech like thine would be neither wise nor safe; and as it will not be for mine own good to have thee much about me, I now purpose bestowing you with one hard by, who was an approved friend to him you wot of." Whereupon he gave one of his servitors charge to conduct his train unto a certain place, and commanding me to follow him, we walked forward into a dark street in Westminster, and stopped at the door of an ancient and ruined house not far from St. Peter's Abbey.

Unto this portal was hung a large scroll of vellum, which set forth in broad black text letters, that within there dwelled a cunning Scribe and Enluminour; and upon knocking we were admitted through a gloomy passage into a vaulted stone room, having therein a carved oaken desk or pew, for writing or study, lined with tapestry, whilst in different parts of the chamber were scattered divers large tomes bound in red or black velvet, with some rolls of genealogies and coat-armours most choicely depicted. There were also to be seen several of those rare books imprinted by a wondrous art, the which had been of late brought into this realm by Master William Caxton, from be-

yond the seas. He who admitted us unto the house, was a grave, yet shrewd-looking, man, whose pale visage seemed to speak of much labour and late watching; and he was habited in a russet dress edged with sable fur, wearing pouch, knife, penner, and inkhorn, like a scribe. It was still bright day-light, although it was now about seven of the clock and full two hours after supper; whereupon he seemed to marvel much at our late-coming, and when we were entered, demanded of Sir Gilbert what he would have with him.

"I came hither," replied the Knight, "to seek for a certain Scribe and limner of coat-armours, by name Master St. Leger, dwelling at the Watchful Dog near the Sanctuary; and if two years age have not strangely altered mine acquaintance with his face, thou shouldest be the very man, whom I remember in the service of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, as *Blanc-Sanglier* Pursuivant, at his last battle on Bosworth Field."

"Fair Sir," answered the Scribe, first changing deadly pale, and then waxing wondrous red, "I am, 'tis true, a Scribe and Enluminour of arms, and do also dwell at the sign you have named, but I am called only William the Illuminator, and claim not to be of any noble house; and, moreover, I am servant unto the Lord Rivers, and Queen Elizabeth, and the most noble Lady Margaret, the King's mother, of excellent bounty; so that ye wot well I may not be him for whom you take me."

"Tush, man!" replied the Castellan, "away with this guisarding, which never can blind such as know thee as well as I do: look better upon your friends, take my pledge, and remember Sir Gilbert De Mountford, if thou hast not forsworn the House of York and Plantagenet; I trow that thou wert less of a craven when thou did'st spread thy tabard over the King's naked body."—With these words the Knight gave unto the Scribe a faded piece of a broom-plant and flower, which he drew forth from his bosom; and which, as I had read in the choice Norman History of Ordericus Vitalis, was the ancient device of the Plantagenets, wherefrom they did first take their name. As the Scribe received the token, his eyes became suddenly lighted up with gladness, and grasping the Castellan's hand, he exclaimed, "By the Keys of St. Peter! Sir Knight, you are right welcome, albeit because I knew you not, I at first dissembled; for the friends of York, as you doubtless wot well, are proscribed and scattered, and therefore do I marvel to find you coming to the Court, unless indeed you were summoned hither by the King."

"'Tis even so, good Master St. Leger," answered Sir Gilbert, "I trow that I once stood fairly in his Grace's favour, seeing that he made me his Constable of Leicester Castle; but for all his smooth words and acts of grace to his opposers, I begin to suspect him shrewdly, and deem that he hates the Yorkists in his heart, though the most of the realm affects them, for

how hath he discountenanced the Queen; albeit he may not put off her coronation much longer if he would keep him safely upon his throne."

"Perchance it may be so," responded our host, "but this is neither wise nor safe discourse for the ears of a youth like your page," pointing unto me; "albeit he hath a wondrous semblance to one, whom I have lamented with much sorrow, and may never forget."

"Right, right, good fellow," said Sir Gilbert, "he hath, and not without reason; so content thee, and look not doubtingly upon him, nor deem that I have so little wariness as to bring thee a babbling boy, whose tongue would talk our heads from our shoulders. Nay, I have that to tell thee of him, which will fire thy loyal heart like a trumpet-call; so fear not, but tell us like a man how matters stand in London, for thou art too honest to be a counterfeit."

Master St. Leger answered to this by saying, that as they had brief time for conference or explanation, he would be content to receive the honourable Knight's report of me; adding, however, that if I were a scholar, perchance I would rather turn over the pages of some of those fair illumined histories, to listening to their converse. He then secured the chamber-door and covered it with the hangings, whilst Sir Gilbert replied to him in a lower tone, "Ye say well, Master St. Leger, the boy is bookish enow, and fairly read, seeing that the good fathers of Ely had him

betimes; albeit, if I judge him rightly, he will find more content in our discourse than in the fairest tome London can shew him."

Howbeit, not to seem too curious, I seated me a little apart from them, and took up divers of the books, some of which were adorned with most choice limnings: but as they talked of the story and sad fate of my House and kindred, of Harry Tudor's oppressions, and his unsettled sway, of the discontent of the realm and it's general affection for the White Rose, of the several competitors for the Crown, and of the restoration of the line of York, mine eyes wandered over the pictured pages, without taking in the matter they recorded, or marking the beauteous forms and tints which were depainted thereon. It was in vain that *Valerius Maximus* recounted the brave actions and wise sayings of the noble and ancient Romans; it was in vain that the glorious *Tale of Troy* was spread out before me; even the sweet and spirit-stirring *Romaunt of King Arthur* I looked upon vain; and the pleasant histories of the *Gesta Romanorum* lay unmarked beneath mine eyes, whilst I listened anxiously and diligently to the converse of the Knight and the Pursuivant.

I remember me that the latter told Sir Gilbert, that the Houses of York and Plantagenet were then subdued to little more than a name, which the King seemed to desire to make powerless and void. On the last day of February, in the first year of his

reign, he had covenanted that the Earl of Huntingdon should marry Catherine, the natural daughter of my father, King Richard, giving her a dowry of certain manors to the yearly sum of two hundred pounds. My cousin, Edward Plantagenet, the eldest son and heir of George, Duke of Clarence, at this time about seventeen years old, he had shut up close prisoner in the Tower, deeming him to be the last male of his name; whilst his sister Margaret remained uncared for excepting by captivity. Even the Queen-mother of his own consort, he had, by an act of his Privy-council, cloistered in Bermondsey Abbey, after seizing upon all her lands and rents, upon the far-fetched pretence that she had taken two of her children from sanctuary, and delivered them unto the late King Richard. Some of her daughters were indeed left with her, but there was even then a wily device afoot for sending both her and them out of the realm, to marry King James III. of Scotland, the Marquess of Ormond, and the Duke of Röthsay, the Scotish King's son: howbeit this compact was spoiled in the making.

But although many persons thus yielded unto Henry's force, and many things conspired to prosper his designs, yet the Queen-Dowager, Elizabeth, did not rest at Bermondsey without much complaint of his scorn of her daughter in not causing her to be crowned. "This I know for a truth," said Master St. Leger; "for having now left being a Pursuivant,

and betaken me unto the writing out and enlumining of books, I have disguised my name and family, and am oft employed by the learned Master William Caxton, the Printer, to trace in his books divers blooming-capitals, of red and blue letters. My skill in making limnings for manuscripts and emblazoning of coat-armours, hath caused him to present me unto his own patrons, the Lord Rivers, Lady Margaret the King's mother, and divers beside, now in great power, by whom I am well maintained and protected.

"It is now, perchance, more than a month past, that I was commanded by the Lady Margaret to carry a fair book of Master Caxton's Golden Legend unto Bermondsey Abbey to the Queen, who was then sojourning there for a season with her mother. It happened that she had gone forth to walk, and whiles I waited her return in an ante-chamber, I heard in a covered gallery near me, divers voices of women; one seeming in proud sorrow and scorn, another low and soft, as of sweet music, which ever best beseemeth them, and a third not less gentle, like the speech of some innocent child."

"It was this last which began, saying, 'you are sad, my mother, and why I pray you? is not my sister a Queen? and do not we live full merrily in this fair Abbey, with it's green gardens and gay flower-plots? good, then, my mother, wherefore do you weep?'—'Wherefore? thou simple chit,' said the elder speaker in a voice of mournful anger, 'Oh Hea-

ven! have I not cause enow, in the oppression of our House, the seizure of my lands, and mine imprisonment in this place? albeit thou, poor Bridget, deemest it to be a right joyous cage. And what though thy sister be indeed a Queen, yet, good Anne,' continued the voice, as if addressing some elder daughter, 'she lacketh the open rite of crowning; and that at the hands of one who dares to fly from his paction, and who, if *she* had not been, would have worn no crown himself!'—'But perchance, Madam,' said a gentle voice in reply, as if of the person last spoken to, 'peradventure, she shall have it anon, and it may be but delayed awhile, and not refused.'—'God's me! daughter Norfolk,' again exclaimed the first Lady, 'is not delay refusal? though not that open one which a bold bad man would utter; but a wily putting-off worthy only of him who devised it.'—'Truth, mine honoured mother,' answered the elder daughter, 'yet will not our loudest and bitterest plaints avail us aught: if we be wronged, therefore, patience is better than vengeance, which will natheless fall in due place and season.'—'Talk not of patience unto me,' replied her mother, 'if thou art child of mine, the daughter and sister of a Queen, thou canst not choose but share mine anger at this continued contempt of the rights of Elizabeth. Was it not mainly by my favour and device that this wily Tudor was lifted unto his present high estate, and shall he outreach me even at mine own game?' "

" Wisely, as methought, avoiding to oppose her mother's passions, the elder daughter now appeared chiefly to endeavour to calm them; saying 'I trow it is indeed my duty not frowardly to cross your Grace, yet if mine own poor, though sincere, thoughts be in aught worthy your ear, they would fain woo you to avoid all new scenes of strife. It is not, I ween, for you to learn that sorrow is enlinked with greatness like it's shadow, and that they who soar highest soonest meet the tempest; sith the dark storm-cloud that bursts upon the mountain's top, often leaves the sheltered valley in peaceful lowliness.'—'Be thine, then, such inglorious safety;' replied her mother, 'and let me possess rule and greatness. My heart, like the guardian-cliffs of Britain, would brave both billow and storm-blast, did I not feel that the place and powers of action are denied to me, and that I must still feign submission and content.'

" They now went forth from the gallery, the two younger females still essaying with soothing words to calm the disordered spirit of the elder Lady, whom I had discovered to be no other than the widowed Queen of the late King Edward, with her daughters Anne, Duchess of Norfolk, and the Lady Bridget or Bride, now some seven years old, I was next summoned into another apartment, where I might behold them together with the present Queen; but though all were passing fair, and the Duchess of Norfolk not the least so, yet that lovely and gentle child, the Lady Bride,

did most enchain mine attention; so beauteous was her hair of paly gold, so mild were her eyes of clear blue, and such a heavenly bright look had she of innocence and devotion, whilst her stature was fair and erect, and much beyond her years."

"Cry thee mercy, honest friend," said Sir Gilbert, at this place, "thou art a passing curious observer of women, and a shrewd listener to boot; but I trow the good Queen-mother will soon be more content, when that the coronation shall be fixed. And whom do men say shall wed the Lady Bride, Master St. Leger?"

"She is to be 'spoused to God, when she cometh of age to take the veil,"* returned our host, "which will lock up another spring of the House of York."

"That were in truth a shrewd pity," responded the Castellan, to the Scribe in almost a whisper, sometimes looking towards me: "an she were now but some seven or eight years older,—their blood would unite well; for that youth is——" and his voice was lost unto my hearing.

"The son of ——, sayest thou?" was the broken and wondering response of Master St. Leger.

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* Various periods have been assigned for the admission of Nuns into Conventual society, though the lawful age was after they had passed their twelfth year; and when they had spent a year in a Religious House they were considered as virtually professed. The usual time of admission, however, for a Nun, was at sixteen, but consecration did not take place until the age of twenty-five.

"Even so," answered Sir Gilbert, "a Steer of the Silver Boar, as thou mayest see by his ruddy face and blue eyes: he is now fitted for good or evil, since he can hold a pen or grasp a weapon, though I know not where to bestow him in these troublous times."

"Leave him for a season, then, with me," rejoined the Scribe: "his own safety will keep him silent, and I can employ him in mine art until we may see how to act farther."

Here, then, ceased their conference, when the Castellan briefly informed me, believing that I had been all along intent upon my book,—that I should dwell for the present with Master St. Leger, until he might better provide for me. We afterwards partook of a brief repast together, during which they had but little further converse; whereupon, wearied with my journey and bewildered as to the true purpose for the which I had been brought unto London, I entreated to go to rest, and was forthwith shewn unto a little upper chamber, by Magdalen, Master St. Leger's ancient and sole servitor.

CHAPTER IX.

VISIONS OF GREATNESS, AND AN ENGLISH FEAST OF LANTHORNS.

No victor, when in battle spent,
When he at night asleep doth lie
Rich in a conquer'd monarch's tent,
E'er had so vain a dream as I.

SIR WILLIAM D'AVENANT.

The wakeful shepherd by his flock in field,
With wonder at that time far off beheld
The wanton shine of thy triumphant fires,
Playing upon the tops of thy tall spires:
Thy goodly buildings, that till then did hide
Their rich array, opened their windows wide,
When Kings, great peers, and many a noble dame,
Whose bright, pearl-glittering robes, did mock the flame
Of the night's burning lights, did sit to see
How every senator, in his degree,—
Their guard attending,—through the streets did ride
Before their foot-bands, graced with glittering pride
Of rich-gilt arms, whose glories did present
A sunshine to the eye, as if it meant
With the fair cresset-lights shot up on high,
To chase dark night for ever from the sky.

RICHARD NICCOLLS' LONDON'S ARTILLERY, 1616.

I KNOW not whether the springs of ambition were quickened in me at my very birth, but it is certain

that, after my royal descent was made known unto me, I was too often led away by the vain thought that I was the lawful heir unto a crown; the which more years and greater wisdom, have at last convinced me to have been all unreal and untrue. With such ambitious fantasies, therefore, in my mind, upon stretching myself upon my narrow couch at Master St. Leger's dwelling, my first considerations were to unravel, to the best of my poor wit, what had been the Castellan's real intent in bringing me at this season up to London, and what dignity I might be called to take upon me.

That he with whom I was now to sojourn was a staunch friend unto the House of York, I felt me to be right well assured of, and perchance both he and the Knight had some device a-foot, which argued no good unto him who was then King; and for a moment my overheated brain conjured up before me the wild thought, that they had a purpose of displacing him to set me upon his throne, and that Sir Gilbert's friendship towards me might have sprung from the desire that I should aid him in his designs. This I knew of him, at least, that he was a bold forward man, and one that would ever be doing, who could trim his sail to catch the wind as it might blow; albeit of late he had seemed much disappointed in his hopes, and wondrously abated in his zeal for the King, whereupon I did at times think myself the subject of his plots to disquiet the realm.

From all that I had heard, it appeared unto me certain that great attempts were at this time making to overthrow Henry Tudor, and also I understood that there was one in Ireland who had already taken the name and royalty of a King, having been crowned there this Lent by the Earl of Lincoln and others; yet were there many doubts touching his real dignity and meetness for a throne, the which were afterwards shewn to be well-founded, he being no other than a low-born knave, a baker's son, named Lambert Simnell, though at this time it was not commonly known. These suspicions led me vainly to think that some who had affected my father, King Richard, might deem it better to claim the realm as my true inheritance; and the more I pondered thereon, the less questionable did it seem unto mine ambitious folly. I remembered full well that the noble King Richard, the night before his death at Bosworth, had told me that should his be the triumph, mine honourable birth should forthwith be declared unto the world; and I thought that peradventure his intent might fall unto others to fulfil: from all which it may well be supposed, that I held it far more wise that they should call me unto a sceptre, than a low-born pretender whose blood was not in any sort so noble as mine. As to my capacity and skill for the royal office, whatever they might in truth be at this time, or whatever they may have been esteemed since,—I assuredly did believe them, with much overweening conceit, to be far above those of

common men, and all fitting to make me a most wise and excellent Sovereign.

So thougnt I until I became lost and perplexed in spirit, when I chanced to remember that which Master St. Leger had said touching the Lady Bride, and the Knight's hasty glancing at her being a fitting match for me, seeing that we were both of the royal House of York. Albeit I had then never seen her, yet did her image seem to be suddenly impictured in my mind and almost present unto my sight; and anon my visions of greatness shewed me how nobly she would hereafter grace a throne with me. But then I thought of her being already, as it were, betrothed unto Heaven, and of her too-early retreat into a convent, ere she had partaken of the joys of life, to entomb her young beauties in holy solitude; whereupon my roving fancy took a lower flight, and I deemed it would be a most blessed estate for me, were I also to quit the world and its' distracting cares, and in some monastery near her devote myself to God.

Such, then, I say, were some of the vain dreams of my youth when I went to sojourn with Master St. Leger, and it is therefore no matter of wonder that I had at this time much of a quick and haughty spirit, ever ready to take place for my lofty birth, and not backward to assert my right by force; seeing that I was now of good strength and stature, and somewhat fitted for contention by the instructions I had received at Leicester Castle: but these feelings were happily

and most effectually suppressed, by an event which suddenly altered the whole scene and tenor of my life, whereof I will now faithfully recount the history.

It is known unto all men, that in the months of June and July in the wealthy City of London, there were once* wont to be held certain joyful vigils and feasts, whereon many fires were made in the streets after sunset, unto which every man bestowed either wood or labour: the which were called *bon-fires*, both because of the good amity they effected between neighbours, and the contentions which they brought unto an end; and also for their great virtue in clearing the air of any infection or pestilence which might be found in that hot season. At this time, too, the richer sort did set tables before their doors by the said fires, spread out with choice banquets, whereof they did invite the neighbours and passengers to sit down and partake; for there were of old no statelier holidays in London than the Vigils and Feasts of St. John the Baptist and St. Peter, at bright and merry Midsummer. I was yet remaining with Master St. Leger, when the last of these festivals, namely, Friday, the

* The processions and festivals of the Midsummer Watch described in the text, were first prohibited by Henry VIII. in 1539, and remained in disuse until 1548, when Sir John Gresham revived them with great splendour; after which period they were never again renewed.

29th day of June, came round; and having a desire to view the pageants thereof, for that they had been much noted both at Ely and Leicester as most glorious shews,—I told it unto my protector, who answered that he would go with me to view them, if so I listed, because he would have me keep unknown, and not hold much converse with any but himself.

'We set forth with all due caution at even-tide, yet had we not gone a great space, when I marked one, who, as methought, full curiously followed and watched our steps. Having noted it unto my conductor, we crossed once and again from side to side of the street to 'scape from his prying regards, and deemed that we had certainly baffled him, when, as we drew nigh unto the Funeral-cross at Charing, up comes me the same fellow right over against us once more. I liked not this, for that I could scarcely think it but chance and not evil design; and mine anger was rising so fast, that I would with a very good will have gone up unto the varlet, and demanding wherefore he dogged us, have broken his head with my dagger. Howbeit, Master St. Leger would in no wise let me from him, but willed me rather to conceal my visage and guard my pouch, wherein were some few of King Richard's gold pieces, albeit my wealth was now of small sum; for in the dusky even-tide, and lonely passage of the Strand, this Stranger might be minded to assail our purses: since the City pageants, being so great a cavalcade and shew, brought together many of

all degrees; and specially not a few of the viler sort, as rogues, cut-purses, quarrellers, and drunkards. Yet, indeed, Master St. Leger doubted, if unto me he might not prove worse than any common robber; but we nevertheless went forward without shewing aught of fear or suspicion, though much disordered by his continuing to follow us, even after we had entered the City.

Howbeit, when we had passed through the dangerous darkness and solitude of the Strand, I could not but marvel at the glorious and sudden light which burst upon us as we issued from the Northernmost side of Powle's Church; though we had afar off seen it's ruddy reflection upon the night-skies. It was, perchance, about nine of the clock and a sweet midsummer even, when we entered the street of the West-Cheap, and beheld such a blaze of light as seemed to betoken no less than that London was enwrapped in a flood of fire which almost turned the night into day. Every man's door shewed like some rural tabernacle, being shadowed with green birch, long fennel, St. John's wort, orpin, white lilies, and such like, garnished upon with garlands of beautiful flowers. There were, also, many lamps of glass, with oil burning in them all the night, some being hung upon branches of iron curiously wrought, which held hundreds lighted at once and made a most goodly show: beside which, there were multitudes of flaming cressets hung up in the streets, and huge lanthorns, or iron grates

with fire, fixed on the ends of long staves and carried about on men's shoulders, or held by them standing at the several lanes and passages. As I looked upon all this with great wonder, the Stranger, who had so long followed us, accosted us with, "Good even to you, my masters, this is in truth a rare sight, well worth some travel to behold; and you, like me, I trow, have been at some pains to look upon it?"

He spake this with a voice and air of gentle breeding, and thereupon I thought that I had done him much wrong in suspecting him of dishonesty; which made me reply unto him with more courtesy, though still with caution, that it was truly a most wondrous shew, even if the lighted streets were all of it.

"An it were indeed, so," answered he, "full many would rail at their scanty entertainment, for I wot well that these bright lamps and green boughs, fair though they be, are the least parts of the MARCH OF THE CITY WATCH; which, by the Lamb of St. John! is even now coming forward: so look, my masters, and I shall describe to you the whole pageant as it passeth by us."

As he spake were heard the trumpets and merry music of the City Waits, with the heavy tread of a large body marching towards us; whereupon word was given that all who came but as gazers should stand by, for that the great procession of the night was close at hand. Firstly, there came a party of watchmen bearing iron cages of fire upon staves, each designated by a painted

badge, and followed by a man with a skin wallet, having therein a light and pitched ropes to serve the cresset. Then came a wondrous pleasant noise of Minstrels, and the City Waits, in their coats of tawny frieze, playing most rarely on crowds, rotes, shawms, dulcimers, sackbuts, and the like; the which were followed by morris-dancers, clothed in antic dresses, making good pastime, sword-players brandishing their weapons, and trumpeters on horseback. Next after them came part of the City Watch, ordered and trained by divers ancient soldiers of skill to be Captains and officers over them: and in truth they were a right gallant troop, there being of them a great number and diversity; as pikemen in bright corselets or burgonets, billmen in Almaine-rivets and aprons of mail, gunners with harquebushes, halberdiers, and archers in coats of white fustian, signed on the back and breast with the arms of the City, their bows being bent in their hands, and a sheaf of arrows hung at their sides. The Constables of London followed these, in bright armour, some being over-gilt, and cloaks of scarlet with gold chains; each one also being attended by his henchman, his minstrels, and his cresset-light.

It will not be questioned by any, that all this stately array brought with it no little press of the gazing and shouting multitude, the which in truth came with such a mighty rush, that I was suddenly separated from Master St. Leger, and borne forward with the

train whether I would or no. I felt much disquieted at this, albeit I could neither withstand the force of the crowd, nor return to my conductor; whereupon resigning myself to be carried along with it, I beheld this stately March pass through it's whole progress, from the upper end of West-Cheap down to the Stocks-market and Cornhill, by the Leaden-hall to Aldgate, and through Fen-Church-Street and Gracious-Street, back unto the Conduit in Cheap. Through all this journey, however, I found him who had watched us from Charing still at my side, as if protecting me from the crowd, for he was a stout fellow enough; at which I marvelled and somewhat forethought myself for having taken him for a knave. Howbeit, I was fretful and much wearied when we returned to the West-Cheap, where the procession passed by us for the last time; and where the careless speech of the rude crowd seemed greatly to disquiet my spirit and kindle mine anger, especially against one clownish fellow who had thrust himself somewhat before me, as we stood in front of the press, and talked without ceasing in a loud and brawling voice.

"Now, my masters," said he, boisterously pushing about him as the City Constables disappeared, "mark ye all well, I pray you; for now cometh the best o'the shew: these varlets in the say jackets of black and white, be the footmen, officers, and torch-bearers of the Lord Mayor, the worshipful Sir Henry

Colet, Knight. There, ye may see, are his morris-dancers;—there his lusty giant, Corinæus, the ancient Trojan, carried by six stout men;—and there be his three most goodly pageants of a Ship, and an Olifaunte, bearing a tower on his back and merry bells therein, and there, too, is a great Red Dragon to betoken the King's Grace, for he is a most loyal gentleman. In midst of all you may note the Sword-bearer, riding in a wondrous fair armour; and next after him, well mounted on that stout roan, the Mayor himself in passing rich clothing.—There you see, too, his twain henchmen following on great stirring horses; and then come the Sheriffs' Watches, of good shew, but not like my Lord's:—howbeit you can mark that each hath his giant clothed like a Saxon or a Norman, with his liverymen, lights, and minstrels.—Look you now, fellows, there, that is Master John Percivall, one of the Sheriffs; and do but note what a fair pageant he hath in that Castle, so thickly set with the King's arms and devices. And there again, is Master Hugh Clopton, the other Sheriff, with a like goodly and loyal pageant of a Crown in a Hawthorn-bush carried by an Angel, to denote how the princely Henry was crowned on Bosworth-field, what time the foul tyrant and crooked usurper, Richard Plantagenet, was slain."

At these most evil slanders cast upon my father by one of such base degree, I could suppress mine anger no longer, but smote him a fierce blow on the mouth which had uttered them, and then hastily snatching

from him the staff wherewith he was pointing, I forthwith struck him to the ground; passionately exclaiming, as I spurned him with my feet,—"Thou liest! dog that thou art, thus to rail upon so worthy a Prince; who lived like a noble Sovereign, and died like a valiant lion:—thou liest in thy throat to call him foul tyrant and crooked usurper!"——

I had already drawn my dagger, and perchance should have slain the villain in the first heat of my wrath, had not the Stranger who stood by my side forcibly grasped my arm, and dragged me from the spot, backward into the crowd, saying, as he looked at the man bleeding upon the ground, "Truly I think he doth indeed *lie*, and is like to do so somewhat longer, I wot;" then adding unto me in a lower voice, "come, my valiant young master, you have shewn enow of your prowess and high birth for to-night, and if you would keep your gentle blood from being spilled by these rude churls, follow me quickly through the crowd." And of a verity his counsel was right wise, since I saw the multitude hastily gathering round the fallen man, and looking after me with fierce glances and loud cries of "Stop the rebel!"—"Seize the traitor!"—"God save King Henry, and no murderous Plantagenets!" whereupon I rushed through the press after my companion, and hastily passing down Sopar's-lane by the Church of St. Mary-le-bow, we turned into Fish-street, where most of the gay cressets were put out and the pageant at an end.

Under cover of the darkness we silently hastened onward towards Westminster, though keeping as much as might be in the obscurest ways and passages, the which seemed wondrously familiar unto my conductor; until at length deeming ourselves safe from farther pursuit, we slackened our speed, and began to breathe and speak unto each other. "A plague upon that slanderous knave!" exclaimed I, though my wrath against him had now somewhat abated, "I trust in Our Lady that I have not slain him! yet he angered me sorely,—for that were a passing shrewd finish to the night's merriment: which, to speak the truth, was the bravest sight mine eyes ever looked upon, albeit they are neither very old nor have seen much as yet."

"Fear not for him," answered the Stranger, "methinks you have done a good deed; inasmuch as by breaking his sconce, you have sent him home sober, which shall be the better for his wound. As for the pageant, 'twas as you say, a brave sight indeed; and truly, at this time we want somewhat joyous, seeing that we have little to cheer us of late under this present King Henry, for even the Queen's coronation, which all men do covet to behold, hath not yet been performed; though he hath been so long married and hath a son born. I trow that matters stood not thus in the days of King Edward."

"Right, good fellow, right," responded I, "nor yet had they been so in the time of his noble brother,

King Richard, had God given him a longer day of rule and sovereignty."

"In sooth," answered my companion thereunto, "in sooth, Master Plantagenet, since I must verily think that such a brave spirit comes of that line, there you strike the wedge on the very head; for the stout Richard was truly a man of whom the realm might well be proud, though, as you note, it had brief enjoyment of him. But men say," continued he, in a more cautious voice, "that he hath left a son, whom the good Sir Gilbert De Mountford will bring forth at a fitting season: what say you to this?"

I had already thought whilst the Stranger was speaking, that all the merry music of that night was not so pleasant to mine ears as these words of praise which he bestowed upon my father, seeing that almost all men spake of him with false and bitter reproach; and therefore my conscience smote me more than before, that I had ever doubted the honesty of one who had thus proved the wondrous excellence of both his heart and judgement. And now that he touched upon the very master-string of my bosom, I was almost about to discover myself unto him, and recount the story of my past life, when the counsels of Sir Gilbert De Mountford, Master St. Leger, and, above all, those of my deceased sire, came into my mind, and restrained my tongue from farther disclosure. We nevertheless continued to discourse freely on the great worth of King Richard, he wondrously

consenting to all that I spake in his praise; and affirming that the wily adventurer who now wore his crown, was, even in the day of his greatest glory, unworthy of buckling on that Sovereign's armour.

So continued we unto Westminster, when, in the openness of my heart and confidence in his honour, I told the Stranger that I dwelled with a scribe there, who, like himself, was a lover of the memory of Richard, and a true friend to the House of York. I told him too, that he might well believe that this was not to be said unto all men, but that I gladly trusted him, because he seemed unto me a good and loyal Englishman; although I had held him in no little suspicion from his having watched us so closely as we walked unto the City.

"Why, my master," said he in reply, "when two men go to the same place, they are like to travel the same road. I marked you, and saw that in your faces that I desired to see more of; so I kept me closely to your side, and as you have lost your other companion, it hath been to good purpose, and I well trust that we shall be better acquainted anon; so that I am right glad you have been deceived in me."

When we came to part, which was at Charing, where I first beheld him, the distant Abbey-bell was tolling the hour of one. Long before the last clouds of the night-skies were touched by the first beams of the morning, I arrived at Master St. Leger's with

wearied feet and disquieted spirit, and heard with much alarm that he had not yet returned; whereupon I seated myself to await his coming, and fell into a feverish and uneasy slumber, all unprepared for what I was next to encounter.

CHAPTER X.

A FLIGHT, A DISAPPOINTMENT, AND THE DEATH OF A DEAR FRIEND.

It standeth so; a deed is do
Whereof great harm shall grow:
My destiny is for to die
A shameful death I trow,
Or else to flee: the one must be,—
None other way I know.

* * * * *

Wherefore, adieu, mine own heart true!
None other rede I can;
For I must to the green-wood go,
Alone,—A banish'd man!

THE NUT-BROWN MAID.

All heads must come
To the cold tomb,
Only the actions of the just
Smell sweet, and blossom in the dust.

SHIRLEY.

IT could not have been more than a short half hour that I had been thus sleeping, when I was hastily awakened by Master St. Leger standing by my side, who, with looks of great sorrow and disquiet, told me that I was in much danger, and must speedily haste me away from Westminster; but desired to know

briefly from mine own lips, that which had befallen me since we had been parted on the past night. This I soon recounted unto him, and albeit he much blamed my rashness and passion, he yet rejoiced that I had not trusted all my secret unto a seeming friend, who might, notwithstanding all which he had uttered, be a very wily knave, and therefore he would in no wise have me within his reach or power. And unto this he added, that it was to be feared a hot search would be presently made after me, for that he had heard my story recounted in divers ways in the streets, with some speech of a pursuivant, and a warrant to carry me before the Council for high-treason; whereby I should run great risk of discovery, and full surely if I were taken lose my head. Therefore, he said, I must clothe me in some disguise all unlike my present habit, and as I could right well act the Friar, he had brought me such a dress, for that it would be the most regarded and least questioned; wherein he counselled me to hasten unto those friends of my House who were presently in arms in Nottinghamshire, on their march towards Yorkshire, whither they intended to draw round them all who affected their cause. He also told me, that divers trusty gentlemen had shewn him that they had already discomfited the King's troops;* and that their

* It is stated by the contemporary historian and Poet-Lau-

host under the Earl of Lincoln and others grew so mightily, that perchance in another fortnight they might march triumphantly over the very spot whereon we did then stand. Master St. Leger finished all by bidding me be of good cheer, for that he had divers friends of much power in that army, unto whom he would give me certain letters which should procure me both a free welcome and much favour.

And now again did the delusive visions of wild ambition and gaudy hope rise up in my heart, albeit at that moment I was little better than a proscribed fugitive. Most gladly did I consent to all that he had counselled, and in my bosom sprang up the vain, though joyous thought, that at no very distant day, I, who was then in semblance a very groundling, might return home honoured of all as a victor, and, perchance, even as a King! I thought, too, that if such should indeed be my fortune, how sweet it would prove to requite me on mine enemies, and specially on him who sat on the throne of King Richard; and how blissful would be the power which would then also be mine, of righting his deserted consort, liberating the imprisoned Queen-Dowager, and beholding and

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reate of Henry VII., Bernard Andreas, of Tholouse, in his two volumes of his most eminent actions which yet remain in manuscript in the Cottonian Library, that during the battle of Stoke, it was actually supposed that the King's party was defeated.

betrothing unto me the lovely Lady Bride, the which thought seemed dearer than all.

Howbeit, these profitless musings were eftsoons broken up by Master St. Leger, who urged me to hasten to change my habit, that I might quit the house before day-break; and in truth I suffered no time to escape me, for speed is life in such straits as mine. I therefore quickly swallowed some food, whilst my constant friend wrote the missives I was to bear with me; and long ere the sun rose upon London, I had set forward in the habit of a Benedictine Friar, bearing with me divers letters to the Earl of Lincoln and his confederates, who were embarked in the very same plots as those which Sir Gilbert De Mountford had undertaken to support.

As the whole of my purposed journey was altogether unknown to me, Master St. Leger himself guided me forth by the Church of St. Martin, standing in a narrow country lane, with fields around it; then through the meadows called the Long-acre, and so by certain fields unto Old-bourne Bridge, whence we entered on the broad space of Smith-field, where the Northern Carriers are wont to lodge: with one of whom we breakfasted at dawn of day, he drinking stoutly to our good journey out of a huge flagon of double-ale. Master St. Leger then bade me farewell with much caution, though with great kindness of speech; and as he departed I looked wistfully after him with somewhat like tears in mine eyes, until the

Carrier told me that our horses were ready, when we forthwith mounted and rode away.

It seemed unto me great good fortune, that at first my rude conductors were resolved to hasten their journey, so that before night closed upon us we were far advanced upon our progress; but me lists not now to set down how we halted at eve and set forward at sun-rise, and therefore let it be enow to say, that we travelled safely,—albeit I was oft-times in great doubt and fear,—until we reached Elveston, in the good County of Nottingham some four miles short of Newark, having spent nearly a week upon the road, and journied 120 miles. I well deemed, however, that such delay betokened me no good; in the which I was not wrong, as shall forthwith be set down.

In this village of Elveston, Master St. Leger had told me, that I should find a fair hostel, whereof the keeper was a true friend unto the House of York, and had most clearly proved it by changing his sign, which of old was the Red Rose, into the White; that all men might know what he was who dwelled therein. Of him was I admonished to ask for farther counsel concerning the Earl of Lincoln's host; and having contented my Carriers, to this hostel I went for lodging, and found him whom I desired to behold. Having called him apart from his guests, I told him, in brief, that I was well known unto divers of his friends in London, and had tidings from them unto the Lord Lovel and certain others of great place in that power; the which

I prayed him to shew me the way of delivering.

The Host, whose name was Gideon Staples, then looked at me with a shrewd eye and gibing visage, and turning from me with clownish jesting, said unto a certain merry Clerk who sat near him quaffing large draughts of ale, "Lo ye, now; goodman Inkpen, how honest men be beset by knaves! This rogue-priest hath heard, I warrant you, how the rebels pulled down my true sign to set up their own foul leasings, and so thinketh that I am his fellow in treason."

As he spake, I noted that the crowd in the hostel seemed much disturbed and boisterous, whereupon I did suspect, having been of late greatly accustomed to doubt of my safety,—that some evil had befallen the Yorkist friends whom I was then seeking, notwithstanding the report of their triumph in London. This the Clerk I have already spoken of, gave me more perfectly to understand, by saying:—"Thou art all too late for the fair, Sir Priest, and York is too far for thee to travel to this journey; and so as honest gaffer Staples, our host, hath no longer fear of being misused by riotous traitors, he hath even to-day proved his true heart by turning out,—sick and sad as they might be,—the wounded rogues whom the rebel Earl of Lincoln quartered upon him; and has gotten back his old sign that was stolen, the which shall be mounted again ere the sun gets up to-morrow."

"Aye," cried another voice, "the play of White and

Red was played out I trow at Stoke a month ago; Lincoln and Geradine with a host of their knaves were left dead upon the ground, Lovel was drowned in Trent, and as for the Almains, they so trusted in, why as the song saith,"—continued he, chaunting part of a ribald ballad made at this time,——

"'Martin Schwart and his men,
Sodledum Syllorum ben;
For gold and for fee, they came o'er the sea,
But they'll never march home agen!
Sing *O weh!* Ah well a day!
For Martin Schwart and his men!'"

This gibing did not fail to produce a mighty outcry in the hostel, all the guests whereof seemed most fierce against one whom they deemed a favourer of the rebels. Much angry and evil speech was bestowed on me, and divers menaces withal; and some did not even doubt to say, that when the true sign was set up again it would be a good deed to make a traitor-priest's head it's companion. When this disorder had continued a brief space, the Clerk who stood near me, suddenly, but secretly, snatched my pouch from my girdle, wherein were some of my letters, and seeming to examine them, cried out, "Stint your clamour, my Masters all! for this is no traitor-varlet, as you deem him, but a good man and true, come to spy me into the foul plots of the rebels, and know what they would do farther against the King; for the

which he hath even now progressed hither from London."

But albeit there was certes some good-will intended unto me by this speech, it did much perplex me, for that I abhorred the very name of an espial; though, as matters then stood, I deemed it not wise wholly to disavow that which he uttered. Yet affirm it, I might not; both because it would have been to have sinned against the truth, and also for that I well knew the letters which he had seized upon would bear witness against me: whereupon I held my peace, since my speech might mar, though it could not mend my fortune.

The merry Clerk, therefore, went on to say much more to the like purpose, the which, as he spake with boldness and I denied not his words, was presently well believed by all, and suddenly wrought me great good-will in the hostel; for Master Staples became wondrous reverent unto me, deeming me, perchance, to be one in the King's service; and nought would satisfy him but that I should be of his own company, and partake of his food and ale at free-cost. Nevertheless, I doubted much as to what all this courtesy might tend, though I seemed to accept it in good part; and whiles I sat in the hostel I heard many circumstances of the late battle at Stoke, and defeat of the Yorkists there, the which were for a long space unknown in London. I inwardly sorrowed over these sad tidings, albeit I could hardly refuse to consider

the Earl of Lincoln's overthrow as a signal judgment of Heaven upon those, who stained a fair and just cause, by supporting the claims of the low-born impostor, Lambert Simnell, whilst I, the true son of King Richard, was utterly disregarded.

Still, as I have said, my mind was much perplexed, as to what those about me did really intend; nor did I marvel less, when he who had seized upon my letters, and so warmly spake in my defence, drew me somewhat aside, and cautiously said in a low voice, "Be discreet in speech and patient in conduct, or thy neck may even yet be found in a St. Johnstone's tippet! keep your eye warily upon me, and when I quit the hostel, do you do the like presently after, with as little noise as you may." His visage was then again changed unto it's wonted look of merry recklessness, as though he would have it unmarked that he had spoken with me; and whilst loud prating and rude merriment continued to resound through the hostel, I waited with much anxiety for the hour, when I should be farther informed of that which I should next encounter.

It was during this time of doubt, that the rude hinds began to discourse of the fate of certain leaders in the late battle; and beside many whom they noted as having been left dead upon the field, and others who had since bled upon the scaffold at Newark, they spake of some who had never been seen or heard of after the conflict; and in especial of Sir Thomas

Broughton, and the Lord Lovel. Of the last, divers affirmed that he was drowned in swimming his horse over the Trent River; and that his sprite had been seen in the night-season by moonlight, on the other side thereof, habited as when he died, but with all his wounds bleeding, and looking wondrously pale and wan. Howbeit, others did contrariwise declare, that he might well be seen in that place, for that many deemed him to be yet hidden in some of the caverns on the farther bank of Trent; albeit, after the closest search and watching, none might discover where he was concealed, or how he was sustained.

Upon this I marked that an old Minstrel, clothed in a purple coat-hardy with a silver clasp, and altogether of a better sort than those lewd crowders which be now most commonly found in hostels, who was then travelling unto the King's Court at Westminster,—rose up and said, "My masters, ye ought not to marvel that a man may live long undiscovered when hidden in a wild place, for divers good authors do tell of the like; and I remember me of a noted history thereof, the which I learned in Bretagne, in France, when I was about the age of the child who beareth my harp. It was made by that most choice Poet, Marie, from some more ancient song; and, if ye list, I shall sing it to ye forthwith for small guerdon, although it is a passing rare romaunt."

As the common sort do ever delight in hearing the wondrous tales of Minstrels and Harpers, albeit, for

the most part they are but glosing lies, the guests in the hostel were full clamorous for the old man to recount this history; at which I was not a little glad, for that I well trusted to escape whilst they listened, the which I did, as shall hereafter be shewn. But, now as the story of my life is so sad, I have thought it meet here to give it somewhat of disport by copying into it the aged Minstrel's rude old tale and rhymes, as I have since found them written in an ancient book in the Abbey of Our Lady of Walsingham.

THE LAY OF ANTÆUS.

A ROMAUNT OF ARCADIE.

I.

'Tis the glad hour of lusty June,
And the blithe laverock's merry tune
Is heard from every tree;
The summer sun is hot and sheen
O'er flowery field and forest green,
And on the purple sea.
His rays upon the snow-mount's height,
Like gold yspread on silver white,
Of dazzling lustre be:
But though far o'er the world he stands,
And shines where broadest earth expands,
I ween he lights no fairer lands
Than those of Arcadie.

II.

In that blest clime, as Poets tell,
The infant-Jove of old did dwell;
And sure were never known
Such lofty mounts and grassy plains,
Such milk-white flocks and gentle swains,
Within this earthly zone.
There, too, were found the palace proud,
The village hinds, the city's crowd,
Rich towns, and lofty towers;
And there were many a Barony,
Of stately name and high degree,
Of wealth and warlike powers.
O'er one of these, long pass'd away,
There ruled a County brave and gay,
Of old Antæus' line the lord,—
Which still Evanthe's tomes record,—
Whose worth so well that province knew
That warmest praise seem'd but his due;
A valiant champion, and a host
Liberal of favour and of cost;
And his king's love, his friends' delight,
Were given those virtues to requite.

III.

But round his ancient House a spell
Was 'twined, as Pliny's pages tell,
That ever of his line,
The heir should quit his castle-home,
And for a certain space should roam,
But where——might none divine.
And it was said, whoe'er should slight
That ancient wont and mystic rite
Beyond his twentieth year;

Childless and timeless he should fall,
Beneath the ruins of his hall,
Which none again should rear.
But whiles Antæus' heir obey'd
This 'hest, and well his task assay'd,
His noble House should 'stablish'd be
In the fair land of Arcadie,
And his proud name adorn it's page
Of story to remotest age.
And, now, the last protracted day
Was hastening from the East away,
And still the wonted course I wot
Was, that unto a lonely spot,
An ancient Knight the heir should lead,
Full-arm'd, and mounted on his steed,
What time the sun's arising light
First pierced the darkness of the night.

IV.

In Arcadie 'tis June, 'tis June,
And the blithe birds with merry tune
Carol from every tree;
All in that golden world are glad,
Save good Antæus, who is sad
As e'er such lord may be:
For, now, unto the forest bright
Have ridden away the Prince and Knight,
And each looked heavilie.
And as they reach'd a wild wood brake,
Beyond a dark and rushy lake,
The Knight unto his lord thus spake,
"That desert waits for thee!

" But ere thou o'er these waters speed,
Here must thou leave thy gallant steed,
Till thou shalt him reclaim;
On this stone cross his rein be slung,
Thy bugle-horn and shield be hung,
To tell thy rank and name;
To call thee when thine hour hath past
Back to thine home with merry blast,
In bliss for life to dwell;
But, Oh! before that fair reward
Thou wilt have conflict fierce and hard,
Young County,—quit thee well!

V.

" Thus stands thy fate:—In olden hours,
Mankind were oft with wondrous powers
Endow'd their forms to change;
To roam the earth in savage pride,
To spread destruction far and wide,
And Wehr-wolves wild to range!
To feast on blood, and feed on men,
To make the forest broad their den;
And many a minstrel-lay
Tells how the woods of Limousin
With *Garwal's* midnight-howlings rang,
Or of *Bisclaveret.*[*]

[*] The romance, or *Lai du Bisclaveret*, is one of those preserved by Marie of France, an Anglo-Norman poetess of the thirteenth century, who collected and copied such minstrel-stories of her own times as she knew to be true, and to have been formed into lays by the people of Armorica, or Bretagne.

One of thy race,—whose wizard skill
Bow'd winds and spirits to his will
In yonder wilderness, when high
The fiends held wild festivity,—
Became a Wehr-wolf, of such fame
That Arcadie yet fears his name!
But, when the hand of age had shed
It's hoary frosts upon his head,
As swiftly fled his crime-stain'd years,
The thoughts of death awaked his fears,
And of that place of endless pain
Which forms the wizard's surest gain.

Bisclaveret and *Garwal*, or *Garwalf*, are the Breton and Norman names for those persons who were periodically changed into wolves; when they became the most ferocious and destructive of all the inhabitants of the forests. Marie's tale is of one who suffered by his wife's treachery, after having been prevailed upon to entrust her with the secret of the place where he deposited his clothes during his transformation, although their discovery and removal would cause him to retain his wolf's shape for life. Some of these circumstances are also to be found in the above legend; which appears to be composed partly of the lay by Marie, and partly of a narrative cited in Pliny's Natural History, book viii. chap. 22, from Evanthes, a Greek author of repute, concerning a sort of doom in a branch of the family of the Antæi in Arcadia, in which there was always to be a Wehr-wolf, who recovered his human shape, if during his nine years of transformation he could refrain from devouring flesh. The action which the poem recounts, is, however, of much later time; since Pliny was destroyed at Herculaneum in A.D. 79, and St. Anthony, who is afterwards mentioned, died in A. D. 356, aged 105.

Then, with repentant heart and eyes,
He pour'd his prayers unto the skies;
Abjured at once the direful spell
That seal'd his covenant with Hell;
And vow'd, though hard might prove the strife,
To Heaven his yet-remaining life.
Then, for his wolfish sanguine vest,
A hermit's hair-cloth round him press'd;
For wizard's wand, the cross he bore,
The mass-book, for unholy lore;
For fiendish song, his sacred chaunt
Or prayer-bell, marked his lonely haunt;
And his whole life was never yet
Equall'd by monk or anchoret,
That e'er in penance-cell's recess,
Cave of the sea, or wilderness,
Sought with the direst pains to win
Heaven's mercy to a life of sin.
Well may ye deem the fiends, whose power
He 'scaped in that repentant hour
Now fiercely did assail his cave
And bade him think Heaven could not save!
Midnight and morn they hover'd round,
To tempt, to mock, affright, confound;
And ever, 'midst his warmest prayer,
Shriek'd in wild tones,—'Despair!—Despair!'

VI.

"'Twas at this time that fame spake high
Of brave and holy Anthony,
Who, in Mizraim's land
Against a foe more fearful yet
Than ever mortal warrior met,
Kept his unyielding stand.

Who, when the midnight tempest burst
In demon-hosts and forms accurst,
And countless as the sand,—
Withstood them with undaunted look,
Whom bribes ne'er moved, nor terrors shook,
His shield the blessed Gospel-book,
The holy Cross his brand.
To him, albeit, 'twas far to roam
O'er Egypt's deserts to his home,
Young County, did thy sire, in woe
For counsel, shrift, and penance, go:
And the good Saint did more rejoice
O'er *his* repentant tears and voice,—
Who sought in pilgrim-weeds the road
That leads from Sathanas to God,—
Than for the world his praise to tell,
Or purpled Kings to seek his cell.
In brief, thine ancestor was shriven,
Absolved, and re-assur'd of Heaven;
Cross'd and sent forth with prayers to aid,
Though on his House the doom was laid,—
That the next heir, in this wild land
Should three years of temptation stand,
Whilst his dark foes all arts should use,
Another Wehr-wolf to seduce!
Thus will it prove a fearful strife
That shall assail thine hermit-life,
And wiliest foes will seek to win
By bliss or bale, thine heart to sin:
But fear thou not, resist each charm,
Fierce though they seem, they cannot harm;
Whiles thou shalt watch, resist, and pray,
Nor seek uncall'd from thence to stray.

But should they triumph!—then in vain
Thou lookest towards thine home again;
Farewell unto Antæus' heir,
Farewell unto thy virtues fair;
For both within this forest gloom
Shall meet their sad and early tomb,
And thy long line of Princes brave
Blasted by thee!—shall find it's grave!"

VII.

As closed the Knight, his horn he blew,
Which on the lake call'd forth to view
A boat that near'd the side;
'Twas rudely framed of bark I ween,
But yet no living wight within
Appear'd it's course to guide!
Full soon was pass'd the farewell-word,
And when Antæus stepp'd aboard
It was the even-tide.
Swiftly the vessel sprang from shore,
But,—though it look'd some flight-shot o'er,
The lake spread far and wide;
It's ruffling waves now seem'd to be
The current of some swelling sea,
Which to the gale replied:
The wild wood-brake, too, did expand
Into as fair a forest land,
As ever mortal spied.
He reach'd the shore at even bright,
When lusty summer's latest light
Was flashing on that wondrous bower,
And gilding greenwood leaf and flower,

Where the warm sun with rich delay
Had touch'd them with the last of day.
Aye, such those ancient woods have been
A wild, but yet a goodly scene,
To those whose fancy would behold
How the earth look'd in days of old:
When, o'er those realms where cities stand
Or yellow cornfields crown the land,
Spread many a forest's leafy lair
Shelt'ring the satyr, wolf, and bear;
As if a sylvan flood had hurl'd
It's deluge over half the world:
And though their glory long hath past
How many mighty reliques last!
Preserv'd for after-times to view
The giant-scenes their fathers knew.

VIII.

The golden sun that lately glow'd
With lustre on the forest-road,
Soon to his tent retired;
The greenwood, which the dusky fold
Of mist and vapour now enroll'd,
No more his radiance fired.
But, as the solemn hours drew nigh
Of silence and obscurity,
Within that distant wood,
The County, whilst enough of light
Was left to guide his roving sight,
Mark'd where a ruin stood.
The moss and ivy o'er it grew,
Where once a warrior's banner flew;

Dark wild-flowers wreath'd the windows round,
Where ladye's bower of old was found;
Long grass had clothed the ample floor,
Which golden arras cover'd o'er;
And all the pile, though still sublime,
Had bow'd beneath the scythe of Time.
He stretch'd him in that lonely spot
To wait the night's uncertain lot;
For, train'd in arms, alike he found
The softest couch or heathery ground,
And they who martial fame would hail
Sleep best and bravest in their mail.
Yet ere the County courted rest,
That e'en those ruins might be blest
From such as sought, in powerful train,
With deadliest sin his soul to stain,—
His warrior-hymns and prayers arose
For strength against his unseen foes,
And holy echoes round him rung
As to Saint George these strains he sung.

IX.

Evening Hymn to Saint George.

"Saint! Soldier! Martyr!—by each name
Inspired by men's or angels' praise;
Oh! let a fellow-warrior claim
Thine ear unto his evening-lays.
The prayers I breathe, the hymns I raise,
Are rude and brief, but thou know'st well
E'en though bereft of priestly phrase,
In whom the pious heart doth dwell:
Ave, Sancte Georgi!

Be thou to-night my patron-guard,
From aught of ill that lurketh nigh;
Nor would my soul thy watch discard
E'en when the morning shines on high.
My ghostly foes thou canst descry,
'Gainst those of earth, this blade shall be
My best defence and prompt reply,
Yet when I strike,—strike thou with me:
AVE, SANCTE GEORGI!

And now I bend me to that sign
And symbol of our common Lord,
The Cross, which decks thy shield divine,
And stands upon my faithful sword;
Oh! by that sacred badge afford
Thine intercessions to my cries,
And be thou, Soldier-Saint, adored
By every champion for the skies:
ORA PRO NOBIS GEORGI!"

X.

Whilst thus arose the County's lay
Darker and darker grew the day,
But when he couch'd his head,
Unwonted thoughts within his breast
Seem'd struggling to forbid his rest,
And sleep his eyes had fled.
"'Tis strange," he cried, "that belted Knight
Who spurns at ease and soft delight,
Whose limbs encased in mail and steel
May seldom gentler vestments feel,
Whose fare is hard, whose course throughout
Hath brief repose and constant doubt,

Should courting want to slumber's bliss
E'en on a bed so rude as this.
But when these towers were in their pride
A fairer couch had they supplied;
And then the minstrels would have told
My coming on their harps of gold;
This hall had glow'd with tapers' light,
And festive board, and goblet bright;
Then, should my wearied limbs have lain
On costly furs, till morn again
Had call'd me to advance
Into the lists of martial fame,
Where knights of worth and 'squires of name,
And many a fair and noble dame,
Had praised my gallant lance.
How fares it now! these walls surround
A lonely spot of forest-ground,
Still is the merry minstrel-sound,
And closed the stately dance!
Their lights are now the pallid gleam
Of the night-planet's flickering beam,
That tints the walls with lambent stream
Half-broken and askance!
Oh! if the dead can look upon
The things of earth, whence they are gone,
Can view their proudest piles of stone
Disdain'd, deserted, and o'erthrown,
Nought of their names or actions known,—
How painful were the glance!

XI.

"But fouler spirits rove, I wis,
In ancient ruin such as this

With evil purpose still;
Wailing, perchance, their towers' decay,
Or, clad in dread or quaint array,
With spectre-masque and goblin-play,
Long-vanish'd scenes again pourtray,
And these void chambers fill
With many a vision of the past,
Too wild for truth, too foul to last;
Yet, be it good or ill
Which lingers in these lonely towers,
Oft to return when darkness lowers,
And revel through the midnight hours,—
Here lies a Christian Knight
Who all unchanged can on them look,
Well can the phantom-pageant brook
Whom fiend nor mortal never shook,
The foeman nor the sprite.
Though wizard-ghosts,—of lofty line
Of Blankenburg and Rodenstein,
Or Barbaross, whose court is made
In dark Hercynia's wildest glade,—
Should rise, as they were wont to come
Ere they departed to the tomb,
And with their fierce and giant train
Should fill these ruin'd halls again,
With power to fright, assail, or kill,
Or gifts to win me to their will,—
Unmoved such scenes should meet mine eye,
Unstain'd my soul should them defy!"

XII.

He ceas'd, and like the words of power
That wizard speaks at solemn hour,

When at his call appear
The spirits of the earth and clouds,
In shining forms and legion-crowds,
And e'en the dead must hear ;—
So, in those ruins dark and lone,
Sudden a stately palace shone,
Up flew the lights amain ;
And, clad in robes long laid aside
For some more new device of pride,
In swept a knightly train !
And there were mantle, pall, and vair,
Tissue and velvets rich and fair ;
With blazon'd shields of chiefs who long
Were known alike in fight and song,
Whose armour flash'd with hues as bright
As if 'twere mortal steel and light !
Then mark'd Antæus each warrior round
A rough and sanguine wolf-skin bound ;
And he who was the chief, I ween,
Of loftiest height and fiercest mien,
In voice most fearful thus address'd,
The wizard crowd that round him press'd.
" Welcome Arcadia's Wehr-wolves all
Unto your solemn festival !
Rejoice ! for to your ancient home
Another mortal Knight hath come ;
Who, questionless doth seek to be
Admitted of your chivalry :—
For it were vain but to suppose
He scorns our might, or holds us foes,
Since not a living wight would dare
To rush so madly on despair :—
Therefore, being known a soldier tried
Who stoutly fights and swift can ride,

Let him approach, and on his knee
Swear unto us his fealty,
Then grasp each hardy comrade's hand,
And thus a gallant Wehr-wolf stand!"

XIII.

Briefly, but bold, the County cried
That he that demon-host defied
In all it's powers accurst;
And, in the strength of God, whate'er
The foulest of the band might dare,
Arm'd with keen blade and holy prayer
He fear'd not for the worst.
Then, with wild cry, that lighted tower
Was changed to midnight's darkest hour,
And forth their fury burst!
But 'twere too fearful and too long,
To tell in this my hasty song
How the young County durst
Their wiles and force alike withstand
Who sought to link him to their band;
Whether, as now, they came full gay
With trump, and masque, and quaint array;
Or, when at night with hideous yell,
Like wolves they howl'd around his cell;
Or, whether, when the tempest roar'd,
To shake his faith their legions pour'd,
In quaintest forms with wildest screams
Thick as the motes in summer's beams:—
All these he saw unmov'd, his prayer
Rose ever 'midst that wild despair,
And, till he heard the bugle-strain,
Unscared, unwon, did he remain.

XIV.

But ere we mark that signal-note
Call on the forest-lake the boat
  Back for Antæus to fare,
I ween one look must given be
Unto the Court at Arcadie,
  To learn what passeth there.
Ye would not deem a Prince so good
As young Antæus might waken feud,
  A subject's heart within;
But he possess'd a lovely bride,
From whom to sever much he sigh'd,
  His trial to begin:
And there was one who oft had sought
To win him to her lustful thought,
  Yet ne'er might favour win.
Whence her dark soul had ponder'd still,
So long the secret arts of ill,
  She found deep means to sin.
The three years had not fully fled
Though Time with untired wings had sped,
Whilst that young bride in sadness sate
Revolving o'er her County's fate;—
For hidden from her must be perforce
The space and secret of his course,—
When, with soft voice, that evil one
Told her, how in the woods alone
Her noble lord was bound to stray,
Till, call'd by her to come away.
  With raptured eye and joyful look
I ween a page's garb she took,
And braced around her vestments sheen
A sword of temper true and keen,

Then on her palfrey lightly stept,
Shook bridle-rein and onward leapt,
Till, all untired, by even's light
The cross and lake were full in sight.
Well may ye ween her County's shield
She knew in tourney, wood, or field;
Well may ye ween she knew his steed,
Left on the forest-vert to feed;
Well may ye ween she tried to wake
His bugle in that greenwood-brake:
And, think not that I speak untrue,
When I declare such blast she blew,
That wood and covert echoed round
The loud and all unwonted sound;
Though ever, as the sylvan strain
Blithely arose, it sank again
Into a mournful note and low,
As if it prophesied of woe.
Nay, some have said that with it blent
Strange sounds of fiendish merriment!
I ween it might be so, full well,
But if 'tis sooth I cannot tell.

XV.

In the greenwood 'tis June, 'tis June,
But the blithe birds have ceas'd their tune,
As if from every tree
The forest-minstrels all had fled,
Or it were winter wild and dread,
And winds moan'd heavilie:
There was no sign of life I wot
When the horn through that lonely spot
Pour'd it's sad harmonie;

But when the echoes 'gan to wake,
A boat upon the forest-lake
The County's bride might see.
Swiftly the tide it traversed o'er,
Swiftly Antæus sprang to shore,
Saw but his own dear bonnibelle,
Which no disguise from him could veil;
Then, as their tears of rapture gush'd,
Each to the other quickly rush'd,
And, in those fond embraces lost,
Deem'd not what price that bliss had cost.
I would that harp and voice might fail
To leave the rest an untold tale,
Or that I might all else forget,
Save their delight who thus had met;
But I must on, my chords must sound,
Howe'er the words or notes may wound;
Sadly, though truly, must I tell
The chance of that young damosell,
Who, all unwitting, summon'd home
Her lord, ere yet fulfil'd his doom,
And aided thus his foes to gain
A triumph they had sought in vain!
From that sad hour, Antæus' line
In Arcadie hath met decline;
And never heir was found to claim
The princedom or the ancient name;
And but this lay is left to shew
Their story wondrous, sad, and true.
For the two lovers, living one
Hath never since them look'd upon;
But deep and ancient lore yet saith,
That, for the County's spotless faith,

They live and love from sorrow free,
In some far land of Arcadie;
Where all their virtues, which on earth
Had but their budding-hour and birth,
Are into perfect beauty blown,
And vice and tiffie are all unknown!

L'Envoy.

Gentles, Adieu!—My Lay is o'er,
Yet deem not that this tale of yore
No goodly moral shews;
'Tis like the wise men's speech of old,
When they were wont their lore to fold
In tales and fabliaux.
Both they who hear, and he who sings
It's strains unto his trembling strings,
It may full well employ;
One moment more those strains receive
Ere yet your Minstrel take his leave
In thankfullest Envoy.
The ancient Wizard-prince, who fell
Into a fatal league with Hell,
Was he who once did stand
Full high, till Sathan him o'ercame,
And saw him driven in guilt and shame
From Eden's blessed land.
The desert is the world, wherein
The Almighty sent his race of sin,
Against the Fiend to fight;
And if they quit them well, I wis,
He calls them to a land of bliss,
His world of endless light.

The bugle is the blast of Death,
The three years' space, man's hour of breath
And this life's rapid flight.
Whence may we all triumphant rise
What time that trump shall burst the skies,
And earth shall vanish quite.
Now thanks to all who patientlie
Have listed this rude minstrelsie,—
Gentles,—Good Night!—Good Night!

Whilst the Minstrel recounted this history, I forgot not the words whispered unto me by the stranger Clerk, and though there was somewhat in his voice and demeanour which seemed as if I had known them afore, yet did I in mine heart wonder who he might be that gave me such wary counsel, and what might be signified by his caution. Howbeit, though I seemed not specially to regard him, I vigilantly watched his movements, with much impatience looking for his departure, although I knew not well what I might expect therefrom.

At length, whiles the listening rustics were intent upon the wondrous tale of the Minstrel, the wily Clerk cautiously departed from his fellows and went forth; and when I deemed that I might follow him unmarked of those around us, I warily did the like. As I looked abroad without the hostel, I found that it was a darksome night; and though in summer, was yet blustering with raw winds, for the clouds racked amain over the yellow face of the waning

moon, which was now dim, and anon was lighted up with a pale sickly lustre: well typifying, as methought, the disturbed estate of the realm at this time. I then gazed around me for him who had called me forth, never doubting that I should find him tarrying for me in the village street, but I saw him not; whereupon I walked some paces from the hostel, deeming that he might have withdrawn himself not to be marked, yet was he nowhere to be found. Not knowing what to think of this seeming mockery, and half-believing that I had been lured abroad in wanton sport to make mirth for the rude hinds within the hostel, I fell into somewhat of a sullen musing thereupon, and was about to return again, when one whom I had not before marked, suddenly started out of that part where the darkness was deepest, and with his hands made sign unto me that I should be silent and go forward; pointing unto a distant and lonely little cottage on a heath, where he briefly told me I should find a friend who did full anxiously await my coming, and forthwith departed without farther speech.

For some brief space I vainly looked after him, and then, much doubting the truth of his words, and sadly musing on mine own uncertain safety, I wandered forward, not marking whither I went, until I found me at the door of the very hut whereto he had pointed; through the half-closed window of which a pale ray of light, as of a single taper, gleamed

mournfully across the heath. Upon thus finding myself at the appointed spot, sad and hopeless though it seemed, I smote gently upon the door, but answer came none: I then struck it a second time, but all was still silent; whereupon I assayed to open it, and, as it gave way beneath my hand, I soon found me within the lone and melancholy dwelling. Sad, and rude, and silent, was the scene which I did then behold; the walls of the hut being coarsely framed of the wattled trunks of trees, plastered with rough earth and damp clay, whiles the mean and scanty furniture lay disordered around. The solitary light I had already marked, threw a pallid and uncertain gleam about the hovel, but fell chiefly upon a narrow bed of straw laid in the midst thereof, upon which was stretched out a dead corse, having it's feet towards the door, and covered with a white sheet. At the head, where the shade was deepest, it seemed unto me as if there sat upon the ground a man in black garments, his face bowed between his knees and covered with his hands, as if borne down with the heaviest sorrow; yet did I greatly marvel what manner of persons these might be, seeing that in all their exequies there was no sign of the blessed cross, to shew that the departed spirit had taken it's flight in the true Faith. As I suddenly came in sight of this most solemn scene, I started somewhat backward, and deeming myself to be altogether unwelcome in that place, was minded quickly to depart therefrom; when

he who sat in the farther part of the hut suddenly looked upwards, as mine approach brake in upon the silence of his sorrows, and as he beheld me he hastily stretched out his arms towards me and said,—"Oh! son of mine adoption, is it from me that thou wouldest fly? Knowest thou not then the form of him who hath desired again to embrace thee, and the voice that would bid thee welcome, even in the house of mourning and the hour of death?"

Every thought of treachery now vanished, as in these words I recognised the well-known voice of my former humane protector, Israel of Castile; and there wanted no other assurance that for me there was no danger in that place. I therefore sprang forward unto him, and ere I could reply he threw his arms around me and wept aloud, whiles he thus gave speech unto the emotions of his soul.—"Oh! my son, thou art returned unto me in hapless hour; and yet, even in the very depths of my sorrow, do I rejoice once more to behold thy face, since thou wert ever unto me as a sun-beam on my dreary waste of life, and as a well-spring flowing in the wilderness. Whither hast thou so long wandered, and where have thy sojournings been even until now? I have suffered much because of thee, albeit my sorrow hath been deepest for that I knew not of thy fate, and whether thou wast in the dark grave or yet in the land of living men; since to sustain thy youth, was a solace unto mine old age and a blessing unto my grey hairs."

"Speak not thus," replied I, with much sorrow, "I pray thee, good Israel, speak not thus, since every word of kindness bears with it the keenest reproaches unto my soul. You, indeed, sustained me with a free and open bounty, which I trust that Heaven will yet requite; but I must have seemed a thankless ingrate in your eyes, to have forgotten even for an hour the pious charity of one, who administered unto my wants with an unsparing hand, however it's liberality might be felt upon his substance."

"Felt it was never," exclaimed Israel, "for as the widow of Zarephath found her stores unlessened by the aid which she bestowed upon the holy Prophet, because the God of Elijah did still keep her little cruse of oil from failing, and her handful of meal from wasting,—so did my poor substance remain undiminished whiles thou wert with me; as if Heaven had given me a blessing for having ministered unto thee, and overcome the temptations which the Enemy awakened in mine heart against thee. But now, my son," continued the Hebrew with a sudden burst of sorrow, "I may take up my complaint with the mournful son of Hilkiah, and say, 'I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of His wrath'; yea, that which I was afraid of hath indeed come unto me.' 'Oh! that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me.' For from the sad hour when thou didst depart from me, sorrows came in upon me as the wild breaking of waters, and my welfare

passed away as a cloud. But now, sit thee down beside me, my son, even as the friends of Job sat down with him in his affliction, and let us raise up the voice of our mourning together, for the dead one which lieth before thee is Naomi, that blessed woman, and the beloved of my soul!"

I heard this with no little surprise and sorrow, and silently seated me beside him, whereupon the Jew seemed to take a mournful kind of joy in speaking unto me of the virtues and piety of his departed spouse, telling me many excellent passages of her life, and specially of her benevolence and affection unto myself. New tears began to course down the hapless Hebrew's cheeks whilst he recounted unto me the causes that led unto her death, in the wild and fierce persecutions whereby they had been so long assailed, and which had been afresh kindled against them at Leicester. These, blent with sorrow for my loss, at last brake the heart of her, who had yearned over me like a tender mother; and whose spirit on that morning had quitted the flesh, after having been so long drooping over the grave. I can, even now, scarcely speak of this mournful scene, albeit a long space of years hath fled since I beheld it, and old age hath brought me unto the confines of life, where Time and Eternity have their meeting-place. The very thought of it still awakens the keenest affliction within my breast, yet truth and gratitude do alike bid me, never to forget the pious and generous friend of mine unfriended youth.

As I sat by Israel in the posture of mourning proper unto the Jewish Faith, he told me that Naomi had made a most blessed ending, duly repeating all the prayers ordained for such as are in their last hours; but as it now drew nigh unto midnight, and the Hebrew law did require that the corse should be sepultured within the twenty-four hours after death,—he did entreat me to watch beside the body whilst he went forth to prepare her grave; for that he would fain bury it in darkness, that it might be according to the rites of his fathers. He conjured me to do this, saying that the spirit of her who lay there was even then hovering around us, and would know all that was done for her until the last spade of earth should be thrown upon the body. He added thereunto, that she would be consoled by the ministration of so beloved a friend as myself; and cautioned me to watch warily, lest the earth-worm and creeping-thing should approach unto that body to deface it, because death had taken from it's features the godly likeness to it's Creator, which in life causeth the beasts of the earth to be subject unto man. He then went forth to perform his melancholy task, and I sat me down by the corse, pitying his blinded spirit, and sad at heart both for the living and the dead. Howbeit, when I remembered the gentleness, virtue, and piety of the departed, in so much as it had been given her to know, I felt great hope of the mercy of God towards her; and, although it was with a trembling voice and

doubtful heart, I said over the body that collect which the Christian Church hath appointed for the day of death or burial: praying that she who was now called hence might not be forgotten for ever, but might be delivered from the Enemy, received by the holy Angels, and carried into Paradise.

As I concluded, the Jew returned, bearing a lanthorn, a spade, and a little linen cloth, enwrapping, as he said, some of the earth of the Land of Israel, to put beneath the head of the corse, for it's protection; and thereupon removing the sheet from the body, he entreated of me to bear it unto the grave. It was clothed in a long white garment, the feet being covered, and the head bound up with a cloth, yet so that the face was open; and saving that the seal of Death was there, and that sorrow had made it's features sad and sunken, the good Naomi lay as though she had slept and smiled: so calm, so beauteous, are the looks of the virtuous in death. It was such a night as I have before noted, when Israel and myself went silently forth of the hovel into a narrow and desolate garden, at the farther end of which he had dug his wife's low grave, in imitation of the old Jewish custom of burying in such solitary places. Before we laid the body gently therein, it was again stretched out upon the ground, and Israel approaching it took it hold of the feet thereof, and prayed the deceased to forgive him if he had in aught offended her whiles on earth, and not to report evil against him in the next world: fol-

lowing this by stabbing the right side of his gaberdine with a knife, and then rending it about an hand-breadth in length, saying "Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe! who hast commanded us to make the rent in our garments." After this we lowered the body of Naomi to it's last resting-place, and the widowed Jew thrice casting upon it a spadeful of earth, walked backwards from the grave, and entreated of me to finish the filling of it up.

As these melancholy rites were ended, the dark and windy night resolved itself into a still and gentle shower, which fell lightly upon the turf that covered Naomi of Castile, as it were the rich dews of Hermon shed upon her remains. In quitting the garden, Israel plucked a turf of grass, and casting it over his head, said, in token of his trust that she should rise again, "And they shall spring in the Cities as the grass in the earth;" and then, entering the house, he left the body of his beloved spouse to rest in peace until the morning of the resurrection.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HIDING-PLACE OF A FUGITIVE YORKIST.

Ælfred, seeing his subjects fly, the enemy in the midst of his country, and no means left either to unite or solicit the few that remained unto him, being forced to give way unto the rage of Fortune and comply with it, lays aside all kingly state and shew of being Prince, and, taking the disguise of an obscure and common soldier, commits himself and his safety to—a concealment so sure, as that neither subjects nor enemies knowing what was become of him, his substance in every place became a common prey.

SPELMAN'S LIFE OF ÆLFRED THE GREAT.

It altogether surpasseth my poor skill, to set down the tears of Israel or mine own sorrow, in doing these sad exequies for the good Naomi, or to remember all the rites of the Hebrew's seven days mourning; wherein he said his taper should be kept burning day and night, with water and a cloth for the departed spirit to return and wash. When he had sepultured the corse, and returned unto the cottage, we partook of some food together, and Israel enquired of my fortunes since we had separated; whereupon I told him how I knew all too late of his cruel persecutions, for the which I had felt much sorrow and the deepest remorse, when

I found that my truant folly and thoughtless delay had brought such woes upon his defenceless head. These, I added withal, had been caused by my sudden encounter with Sir Gilbert De Mountford, then Constable of Leicester Castle; albeit he had since left the usurping Earl of Richmond, and had again become a defender of the House of York.

"Go to," replied Israel, with somewhat of mournful anger in his voice, "this is neither time nor place for speaking of such words; and, as touching thine own safety, had thy speech been heard by those from whom I have now withdrawn thee, they would not be slow to lay violent hands upon thee as an enemy to the King. Tell me, then, of this hereafter in a safer place, but be silent upon it now as the very walls around us or the earth beneath: for, as the Wise Man saith, 'a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.'"

Yielding me unto his prudent admonitions, I held my peace, and he thereupon continued to tell me that when he was put forth from his dwelling, he took with him what little of his substance he might, and sought to pursue his wonted labours in another part of the realm. When the friends of the House of York arose in arms, he found them ready to traffic with him; but yet, although he was courted by more than one of their leaders, he had never sought to appear as openly engaged with them, and they also held their commerce with him in secret, lest the

name of an unhallowed Jew should bring dishonour upon their cause. Howbeit, in their neglect and his own caution, did he find his safety when their hopes were laid low by that most fatal defeat at Stoke, whereof I have already spoken; since, in his garb of a pedlar, he passed un-noted with the boisterous partisans of Harry Tudor, who were met in the hostel at Elveston, and so had beheld my arrival with the Carrier. It would have been but to have exposed himself to danger and contumely, and me to great hazard, had he then accosted me, which he would in nowise risk; whereupon he prayed the careless Clerk to draw me forth out of that perilous place, and take from me such papers as might witness against me. This he did, being Israel's debtor, and so not unwilling to do him a benefit; and truly the Hebrew's heart yearned over me, notwithstanding my seeming desertion of him, and he sought again to offer me the best of his succour and counsel.

Touched by this new mark of his benevolence towards me, whatever fear or doubt had heretofore withheld me from declaring my birth unto him, I might now no longer conceal from so true a friend the real estate of that unhappy wight whom he had so readily aided. Great, in truth, was his wonder, to learn that he whom he had been the means of preserving from death was the son of a King! yet may I not say that such disclosure made him more kind unto me; albeit when he thought upon mine altered

fortunes, livelier compassion could not be manifested, than he shewed unto my lofty birth and present distresses. For, in truth, even in the very midst of his own sorrows was he desirous of soothing mine, and would not see me cast down; reminding me that I was still but young, and that the ever-rolling wheel of Fortune might soon raise me from my present abasement. Yea, the better yet to sustain me he brought unto my memory divers examples set forth in the holy books, shewing that it hath ever been the wondrous way of the Everlasting King of the Universe, that he who was now cast down might lyne ere long to be lifted up again; as contrariwise he who was exalted unto the very summit of greatness should remember, that he might fall from the steep rock of pride into the very depths of lowliness. Thus, said he, the holy David rose from being a keeper of sheep to be the monarch of a great nation; and so did the proud Nebuchadnezzar from being King over mighty Babylon, come to be an outcast from man, and made like unto the beasts of the field. Therefore he again willed me to be of good cheer, even recalling unto my mind how "the Nazarite,"—for so named he the Divine Saviour of Man, whom I adored, and whom he, albeit he shared not in the benefits of the Christian Faith, could not but admire,—had most wisely taught that the meek spirit was blessed, and should verily possess the earth; that the proud of heart should full surely be cast down; and that whilst the ungodly great

should look for a fall, the virtuous of lowly mind might hope to be exalted.

The suddenness of my meeting with the good Israel, the mournful duties wherein we had been engaged, and this discourse which followed them, had thrown me into no small disorder, and caused me for a while to forget those letters taken from me at the hostel, which I had brought from London, as commendations unto the favour of men who had no longer safety for themselves. This I forthwith told unto the Jew, desiring his counsel, and adding that perchance, by remaining with him, I might bring him into new hazards, since the missives of which I spake, were secretly addressed unto divers persons most unfriendly to the State, or at the least unto him who was at the head thereof. Howbeit, in this matter my fears were vain, for, as I afore said, the Hebrew's care for my safety had specially charged the Clerk at the hostel to take from me any papers which might put me in aught of danger; and on telling me of this Israel of Castile restored unto me the pacquet. I now looked upon it with much sadness, as I recalled the friendly confidence wherewith it had been given, and mine own wild yet cheering hopes on the receipt thereof. It was superscribed with the name of the Lord Lovel, upon the which I could not help noting that the glance of the Hebrew rested with much curiosity and desire, as mine did with unfeigned sorrow and disappointment. He then enquired of me touching that letter,

whereto I replied with all frankness, that I had trusted to have delivered it unto the noble Lord himself; at the same time lamenting the hapless defeat wherein he and so many brave peers had been overthrown.

Unto this Israel replied, that I ought not too rashly to despair, since, though much had in truth failed, all was not lost; and that it might yet be mine to deliver the letters for Lord Lovel into his own hands, and to converse with him: if not so hopefully indeed as I had once looked for, yet, perchance, as freely as heart could desire. Then remembered I the discourse in the hostel touching that Lord's supposed concealment, though still his speech caused me to wonder much, and to enquire of him why he believed that we might yet meet. The Hebrew answered unto this by telling me that he had long been well known unto the Lord Lovel, who had more than once befriended him with King Richard, and that after his hasty retreat from the fight at Stoke, Israel had advised with him touching his hiding-place; for he was right glad to declare unto me that he had not fallen upon the field, the report of his death and drowning being only a cunning device to turn aside pursuit. Farther than this, too, he told me that he lay concealed not far from that cottage, and that, perchance, in the coming night we might visit him together. "For albeit," added he, "it is written in the laws of our Faith, that he who mourns over his dead, shall not go forth of his house for seven days, yet are we as strangers in a strange land, wherein

the laws of Moses are set at nought, and the Children of the Covenant persecuted for obeying them. Wherefore our Rabbies do suffer us to perform only that which we may, until the restoration of all things; when we shall return triumphant unto Canaan, when the Temple shall be re-edified in all it's glory, and when the Daily Sacrifice shall be offered again."

We now assayed to take some rest during the brief space which it wanted until morning, and I continued with the Jew in close hiding throughout the day which followed; wherein he ceased not to speak words of comfort unto me, even in the midst of his own sorrow. Yet did he wisely caution me against hoping aught from the Lord Lovel, and even against looking to find him that which he once had been; for, albeit he said it was true that he still lived, yet was he shorn of all his greatness, and in such altered plight that even a peasant might have compassionated him, into so sorrowful an estate had he now fallen. Sooth to say, he was, as it were, little better than one dead, since he had been fain to avail him of the rumour spread abroad that he had been drowned in attempting to swim his horse over Trent, whereupon his possessions had been seized, and given unto others; and not to deny this report,—unto which it did much concern him that credence should be given,—he was full cautious of being seen by either friend or foe, who, out of love or malice, might make it known that he was yet in life. Howbeit, having encountered Israel when he

first escaped from the river wherein he was deemed to have been lost, of him alone he asked aid, and him only did he entrust with the knowledge of his hiding-place. But not even unto me would the faithful Hebrew reveal the very spot thereof, until he had first learned from the Lord Lovel himself that such disclosure should not mislike him; since Israel declared, that as he dared not unbidden take a stranger unto him when he was a powerful noble, he held it to be baseness so to deal with him when he was such no longer.

After having thus spoken, he left me in the cottage for some hours alone, not disclosing unto me whither he went, but desiring of me to await his return; the which was not until night had again overclouded the skies. But when he at length came back, he told me that I must the same hour go forth with him unto the Lord Lovel, who, from his report, did desire to behold me with much impatience; whereupon I declared my readiness to follow him.

The night, like that wherein we buried Naomi, was chill with wind and shower, and full dark and murky, because the moon, then far in her wane, had not yet arisen; which, as methought, did well image out the sudden and unlooked-for blight, that had fallen upon the cause and followers of the House of York. We journeyed across divers fields, wild and pathless, lying Northward from Elveston, and over the fatal plain near East-Stoke, yet marked by many

signs of the late battle; often making our way through hedges which seemed as if lately broken; as though the Jew had meant by this rugged and uncertain road, the better to guard the safety of him whose life was now in his keeping. At length we turned into a deep and narrow lane, leading downwards with a very steep descent, cut, or worn, through lofty banks, overhung by ancient trees, between which the night-winds sighed with a mournful sound. From the chillness of the air in this place, methought it led to some broad water, the noise whereof I presently heard; concerning which I enquired of my conductor, who told me that we were now upon the banks of Trent river, near Fiskerton-Ferry, and the hiding-place of him whom we came to seek. He added, moreover, that of all the sad sights which I had ever then looked upon, this which he was about to shew me was the saddest. "Thou hast seen," said he, "greatness in sorrow and royalty in death; but it now remaineth for thee to behold a proud noble and stout soldier in the dark days of his life, and, like the Prophet Jonah, a living man plunged into the belly of the grave."

As he spake we approached unto the river, where a little ferry-boat was lying fastened to the shore, the which such travellers as came that wild road, crossed in to the other side, and left there at the ferry-keeper's abode. When we had passed over, and had again chained the rude barque unto the bank, we landed in

another deep and narrow way like unto that we had quitted, along the which having passed for some time in silence, Israel suddenly turned aside into a hollow still more strait and steep, seeming but like a water-course, worn by the wintry rains when they rushed downwards from the high banks unto the river. When we had entered it, which we did singly because of it's extreme narrowness,—I saw a faint spark of light as of a glow-worm, seeming to be upon the grass beneath me; though as we continued to descend it grew larger, and flickered upon the wet leaves which hung all around us. Then the Jew, silently sliding himself down into an opening which I now first noted, beckoned unto me to do the like; whereupon I cautiously followed him, though not with care enow, since my feet slipping from me on the wet weeds, I fell to the bottom thereof at once. He turned towards me to reprove my rash haste, but finding me prostrate, said nought until he had aided me to rise, when in a low voice he pointed out to me one seemingly much wounded, in rich, though tattered raiment, sitting in a dreary cave by a little fire, having his arms folded and his wan sad visage turned upward, as if resigned to and awaiting the stroke of death. As I gazed upon this solemn sight, I shuddered and drew in my breath with dread and horror; whilst the Jew, to cause me at once to know him on whom I then looked, as well as to notify our presence unto the sad inhabitant of the cave, exclaimed in a

hollow tone, "Son of King Richard, behold the hapless, but good Lord Lovel!"

Upon hearing his voice the fallen Noble started to his feet and seeming to grasp some weapon which lay near him, cried out "Ha! discovered at last! then will I not die alone!" but as he looked earnestly towards those who had so suddenly broken in upon his hiding-place, he recognised the features of the Hebrew, and continued "What; my faithful Israel, is it thou? then have I nought to fear; though from your sudden and silent coming I had half deemed that ye were foes, and that the hour of Lovel's death was indeed at hand, since the blood-hounds of Lancaster had tracked him to his den."

"Nay, my good Lord," answered the Hebrew, "be such evil far from thee; thy servant came hither but to perform the promise which erewhile he made, to return before day-break, and bring with him the youth whom it was your pleasure to see: the son of a Royal Plantagenet!"

Then did the good Lord Lovel receive me with much gladness, and as he grasped my hand with kindly pressure, I felt a warm tear fall upon it from his sorrowful and aged eyes. In sooth the moment was full sad, yet was it sweet unto me to find myself thus greeted by one who ever stood high in the favour of King Richard, being his most noble friend and valiant follower. I can now remember nothing as to the manner wherein I did accost the Lord Lovel, or give

him thanks for his courtesy unto me: yet is it of little import, since I have ever found in all passages of my life, that when the heart hath been most full, the wit hath been fettered in thought, and the speech enchained in utterance; and that oftentimes, when my mind hath been most eloquent, my tongue and words have rested perversely mute. Howbeit, though such I dare well say was the truth at this time, yet did the hapless Noble gladly overpass my lack of courtesy; joying on any terms to meet with a true relique of the House of York, and specially of that Sovereign whom he had ever found so gracious. When I delivered into his hand the letters from Master St. Leger, whereof I speedily bethought me, he read them with much care, sadly shaking his head as he concluded, and saying that he who had given me such commendations into his favour, little deemed how worthless they should prove; for that I might now note but all too plainly, that he was in greater want of protection than even myself. He added thereto, that albeit by the aid of the good Israel he had not yet wanted daily food, yet, by reason of his advanced years, and having been long wonted to command the attendance of many servitors, he felt him but ill at ease in that mournful solitude.

After we had much discoursed of these, and divers other matters, he declared it to be his wish that I would abide with him for some few days; and when I consented thereto, he testified much thankfulness

for what he termed my lowly courtesy. Howbeit, unto me it seemed that although I was indeed of royal birth, I stooped not much herein; seeing that I lacked concealment little less than he, and knew not where to find a securer hiding-place. In good sooth, too, I had begun to be somewhat aweary of the world, since disappointment had opened mine eyes unto it's deceits and sorrows; the which I was no longer to learn are ever the portion of mortal man.' The unsuspended doom given forth against him, what time his progenitors were expulsed from the blessed land of Eden, still presseth heavily upon every one that is born of woman; and he who depicts unto himself unclouded happiness on earth, or deems that he can subdue the agitations and sudden changes of this life, —might as wisely look for substance in a vapour, build his house upon the sand, or seek to bridle in the waves of the ever-rolling waters.

CHAPTER XII.

THE FUGITIVE'S ESCAPE TO HIS HOME

"Oh! where are ye going, Lord Lovel?
My dearest tell to me:"
"Oh! I am going a far journey,
My own countrie to see."

ANCIENT BALLAD OF LORD LOVEL.

Now loud and chill blew the westlin winds,
Sair beat the heavy shower;
Mirk grew the night ere Hardyknute
Wan near his stately tower.
His tower that used wi' torches blaze
To shine sae far and wide,
Seem'd now as black as mourning weed,—
Nae marvel sair he sigh'd.

FRAGMENT OF HARDYKNUTE.

It was full quickly concluded in our brief and scanty council, that all things touching myself should be according to the Lord Lovel's desire. Thereupon the Hebrew departed from us whiles it was yet dark, promising to visit us again after the close of the next day, with such provisions as he might best furnish for our comfort and sustentation; but I continued in the cavern with the fugitive Lord, and in free and familiar converse upon our past hopes and present sor-

rows, we whiled away the mournful though not wearisome night. Right glad, indeed, was that noble Viscount, once more to have near him one with whom he might hold his wonted discourse, and who might partake with him of the occupations of that concealment: for, bred as he had been in stately castle and camp of war; he knew but little, and could brook less, how to perform them for himself. In truth, I pitied him for this, deeming it a full sad matter to see so great a Noble, so entirely dependent upon others for almost all which might bestow comfort, or calm his troubled spirit in adversity. At such times, also, I often blessed mine own lowly rearing in the Monastery of Ely; the which, by ever constraining me to be mine own servitor, had caused me, although a King's son, to know fewer wants, and to have greater aptness in administering unto them, than he who was now my companion: whom, indeed, until this time, the witless multitude had looked upon with much envy, as the very minion of good-fortune and prosperity.

In the closeness of our intercourse, but little time was wanting to cause our sudden acquaintance to become as firm and compacted a friendship, as might well stand between an aged man like the Lord Lovel, and such a youth as myself. We led a wearisome and unbroken life, marked only by the brief nightly visits of the faithful Israel, who brought us such supplies as he might best provide us withal, and hastily departed again before the day broke. The cavern

itself, too, was a narrow and dreary abode, though it's cureless evils were lightly regarded by me when I saw how impatiently they were borne by him with whom I sojourned. For, albeit he knew well what matter of concern it was that he should still keep him in close hiding, he endured the restraint thereof with a restless and wayward spirit. When the summer-storms beat in upon us from the mouth of our cave, and the drenching rains made divers creeping-things of the earth crawl forth into our view, then would he shrink from the sight thereof as one aghast, and appeal half franticly to the God of Nature, if it were fitting that the noblest beings of His creation whom he had stamped with His own image, should be prisoned in a loathsome vault, there to grovel with the trailing earth-worm, the newt, and the adder. At such times I have urged what considerations I might to soothe him, albeit, my weak speech could not bring back unto contentment one whom calamity had so shrewdly dealt withal. Yet might I well note that he wished me not to think him thus unmanly, for that he would tell me how he had never shrunken from toil or danger either in the march or the battle-field, when he would partake of the coarsest food, and sleep on the hardest couch of the rudest soldier without complaint; but to be thus mewed up in a damp den, without power to resist his misery or hope to cheer it, seemed unto him not less dishonourable than sorrowful, and his heart died within him to endure it.

To look back unto those days of warlike daring, and to speak of his own prowess therein, and the valorous acts of such as aforetime he had fought withal, formed almost the only matter of discourse wherein he now seemed to take aught of delight. But of these he would speak much and freely; and sometimes grew so inspirited in recounting them, that he seemed almost to have forgotten his sorrows. He told me how, some five years past, he had marched into Scotland, with King Edward's army, under my father, who was then Duke of Gloucester: how he had fought for him at Bosworth-field, and on his sad death and the defeat of the Yorkists there, how he escaped, and was as now, living under close hiding, until at last he got away beyond the seas, unto the Duchess of Burgundy: how he returned thence with the Earl of Lincoln, and divers others, to support Lambert Simnell against Harry Tudor, as one way of working their own revenge: and, finally, he told me, in warlike speech, albeit with heavy cheer, how the late battle of Stoke was lost and won.

"Ye might well mark the place of fight, good Richard," said he, "as ye came hither, lying a large mile out of Newark on the South, and our host stood on the brow of the hill; a well-avised post in truth, and counselled to Lord Lincoln by the brave Almaine leader, Martin Schwartz, who left his body on the field like many other stout soldiers. Harry Tudor's battle was parted into three, whereof the vaward, led

by the Earl of Oxford, had the best of his power; and this we encountered about nine of the clock on a fair June morning. I wot well, that more than once Harry felt his crown shake upon his head; but in brief, God would have it so, that after some three hours hard fighting, Lincoln and Geradine were slain, beside four thousand stout hearts of English, Dutch, and Irish, the which was full half of our host. Howbeit, even on the losing side, may God so speed me! as I never looked upon a better foughten field; for those same Almaines battled and died like very lions, and the fierce Irish, with no other defence than their mantles, and no other arms than their skean-knives and darts, did and dared more, than many who were clothed in gay armour of proof and carried better weapons. But all might not do against an out-numbering force and mounted men-at-arms; and so all that our power could shew was how to die bravely and sink with our lost enterprise. For myself, I quitted not the field until I saw the best of my fellows and followers lying dead around me, and then putting spurs to Whiterose, the brave steed, as if he had known his master's hazard, gave a noble bound from the field, and galloped forwards over hill and plain towards Trent; where the hollow way to Fiskerton-Ferry was running down with blood, as full and fast as ever it did with rain in the spring-time. On we dashed into the river, swollen as it then was, when, just as we had reached the steep banks on this side,

my poor wounded horse, throwing out all his strength to leap upon them, found his life fail him, and reeled backwards dead into the waters! I sank with him as ye may well guess, which perchance caused the friendly report that I was drowned, that hath since proved much of my safety; but as I speedily got quit of the body, and struck out to swim, I did at last get safe to shore, though a sad, a wounded, and a proscribed fugitive!"

The gallant voice and look with which the noble Lord Lovel had spoken in the first part of his discourse, became hurried and impatient as he spake of his defeat and escape; and all disconsolate as he finished with the death of his good steed. "Alas!" added he, "surely never knight crossed a better barb than that which lies in yonder flood; and I tell thee, young Plantagenet, I have given to his loss all the sorrow a soldier can bestow. But why should I mourn for my charger, who am destined never to couch lance nor draw sword again? for whom no trumpet, save the last, will ever sound loud enough to call me forth from this life of shame and sadness. What availeth it, too, that I have been of England's proud Baronage, a Knight of her Chivalry and a Councillor in her State, since I am now fettered in this loathsome den? Oh God! I beseech Thee take from me life, or restore me unto honour!"

Such, I do well remember me, was the impatient and murmuring speech of the Viscount, whiles I re-

mained with him in his retreat at Fiskerton-Ferry; to be quit of the evils whereof he at length said unto me, that it would now be more meet to assay escaping thence, and seeking a better hiding-place elsewhere. He told me, moreover, that there belonged unto him an ancient family-park and dwelling, nigh unto Witney in Oxfordshire, called Minster-Lovel, unto the which he would fain remove; for, could we reach unto it, there we might rest in greater security, beside being sheltered from the continued storms which beat in at our present cave: since it may be noted, that the summer of this year was declared by divers persons to be the most troubled with tempests, and unkindly to man, that the oldest then living had known in our land.

Upon this I questioned of my companions, if such benefits might by any means be won, what hindered that we should forthwith seek them; since the heat of pursuit after the Lord Lovel was now well over, and it seemed unto me that journeying by night through the transverse and untravelled roads which we must pass,—albeit the toil would certes be great,—might not have more of danger than our present hiding-place. But on the other hand, the Hebrew would in no wise counsel such a course, for that he affirmed it was reported that the King had seized upon all places, belonging unto such as had taken arms against him in the late uprising in the North: added to which Israel was somewhat feeble from age, and fearful either by nature or through much perse-

cution. Yet, nevertheless, my words did so greatly inspirit the Lord Lovel, whose mind was already much disposed to depart, that at last he would be stayed no longer. For the good Viscount declared, that even though his enemies might have seized upon his abode at Minster-Lovel, yet was there attached unto it a certain secret chamber, entered by a long vaulted passage under the park, and roofed with turf on the outside, so that it might never be discovered; the which was known unto none of his present foes. Unto this retreat he doubted not that we might safely travel, and albeit it might not prove the best dwelling that man might desire, yet would it be a bower of bliss when compared with the dreary sepulchre wherein we were then buried.

Thus were we all accorded and ready to depart, for though the Jew was slow to undertake this enterprise, yet was he full prompt and zealous in performing it; and yielding unto the Lord Lovel's desires, proffered him such aid as his small power might procure for us. All the counter-roads of England were unto him well known, and he engaged to lead us in those which might be travelled most securely by such fugitives as we: so that all things were soon disposed for our departure, and in fourteen days from the time of my being first conducted unto the sequestered soldier, we set forth at midnight from his retreat at Fiskerton-Ferry.

When the noble Viscount emerged from his dreary

cavern into the open country, like the dead Lazarus coming forth of his grave, and looked abroad upon the dark blue night-skies that were studded with thousands of stars, he felt that it was a full blessed thing to breathe the free air, and to walk unrestrained betwixt earth and heaven. I have already noted that his rich dress was all despoiled and tattered, and therefore in lowly habit did he venture upon his journey; although Israel had safely disposed certain chests, containing his arms, and some other apparel which he had provided for him,—upon the stout *rounceys*[*] which awaited us a convenient space distant. The Lord Lovel deemed that it would be wiser to cast away this furniture, but thereto the Hebrew would not consent, because he trusted unto it to carry us on our travel with the less question; for as he would agree that the Viscount should journey in the night only,—so where he thought it meet to stop during the day, these packs would furnish a fair excuse for halting, and cause us to be taken for chapmen; the rather indeed, as he himself had of late been known as the like.

I have oft-times wished,—albeit the attempt had perchance proved a vain one,—that I had kept a brief note of this our progress over divers cross-roads of some eighty-four miles; but I was at that time all too much possessed by the cares and fears which from hour

[*] Horses of burthen.

to hour pressed upon us, and by mine unceasing efforts to keep up the heart of my noble companion in his state of debasement, to think of making any such record. Many were the rude gibes which we encountered upon our journey, from the rustic clowns whom we met at early morn; whereat Lord Lovel's spirit would sometimes rise and his choler vent itself in some sharp speech, the which was ever too well-framed and stately for such as he seemed to be. Whereupon I was full fain to hide it by a pious benediction, or Latin text, as became my religious habit, or else by words of mirth; which turned aside their revilings into reverence, or made that which looked like hazard to end in disport and laughter.

So kept we on our way for some good space of time, until we got unto Banbury in Oxfordshire, whereat the Viscount was much rejoiced; and, by our ceaseless travel in the night-season, we did at length arrive at Crawley, a little vill lying some mile distant from Minster-Lovel, whereunto we had been at such pains to reach. It was, as I remember, the midnight of Friday, the 3rd day of August, when Israel rode forward with his goods unto a little hostel, which of old had borne the sign of the Lion of Lovel; but which, since the defeat of the Lord of that name, had been altered with rude art into a Red Dragon. The Jew was not unknown at this house, and, therefore, when he knocked loudly at the door and told his name, the host forthwith arose and bade him welcome, receiving

him and his horse into lodging. Then, as it had been afore plotted, my companion and I came up like two benighted wanderers, and with lowly speech prayed shelter for a brief space, and to be solaced with a stoup of liquor. Unto this the host answered churlishly, that he well deemed that I was a hedge-priest, and my companion little better than a knave, who sought but to catch up spoil as we might, and bade us go look for entertainment elsewhere. But upon this the Jew interceded that we should not be so dismissed, and at his entreaty we were suffered to enter the hostel.

And now, the good Lord Lovel found but little comfort in the tidings which awaited him here; for unto such questions as the Hebrew put unto our host, touching the then condition of his ancient domain, it was answered, that the King's soldiers had seized upon Minster-Lovel, and merrily, right merrily had been living there, upon the brave stores of paddock and pasture-field, buttery and cellar, although they had now abandoned them unto a meaner guardian. "I trow," said he with much discontent in his voice, "that the knaves did little else than feast and quaff; for your hungry soldier, set to guard a rich capture, is like your beggar set upon horseback, seeing that the one will ride to the Devil, and the other will drink himself blind with the spoil. And I warrant you, my masters all, that this was matter of some concern unto me, seeing that they never spent a cross at my hostel,

which was shrewd unneighbourlike as I take it, and clean against honesty; for where should men be merry save under the taverner's bush?"

The Lord Lovel and myself, having contented our host, now speedily went forth, and the Jew soon after did the like, under the guise of looking unto his horses and watching our motions. He failed not to bring with him one of the lesser and lighter chests, and we walked hastily onwards to Minster-Lovel. I cannot, even yet, but well remember, the sorrowful voice and air of the noble Lord, as, in his present low estate, he approached the fair turrets which were once his proud inheritance, and which now rose gloomily and dimly to his view in the overclouded midnight, and the cold shower which was falling around us. It was in truth no marvel that he sighed, when he bethought him that the mansion, which, in the pride of his heart he had exulted to call his own from a long line of noble sires, had been seized upon by his enemies, and filled with boisterous soldiery, who had destroyed his substance and rioted in hall and bower, brawling in the midst of the ruin which they had made. He, too, that had been wont to enter his mansion richly clad, in the broad face of day, with all honour, and a noble retinue; now drew nigh unto it in darkness, a proscribed fugitive in tattered raiment, and followed only by a despised Jew and a powerless orphan: in brief, the place, as the holy text saith, 'which knew him once, then seemed to know him no longer.' Ne-

vertheless, much as he was dismayed at these things, Lord Lovel failed not rightly to trace out the cunningly-concealed entrance unto that vaulted passage, which led into the secret chamber whereof he had spoken, and which he had so greatly desired to reach.

Of this place I may here note that it was a stone cell, like an anchor-hold,* though somewhat larger, but built and fashioned for the abode of one vowed to live in solitary devotion; lighted from the top by a little oriel window, cunningly framed of part of a more spacious one in the room above, though it might not be discovered even by the closest search. At one end a narrow winding stair led to the dwelling-house through a secret entrance, and at the other were a fair altar and a rood of stone, with a figure rarely well carved thereon, and missals, and books of Offices and breviaries, lay scattered about. But notwithstanding all

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* *Anchor-holds* were the dwellings of Anchorets, or those religious persons who never quitted their cells; which custom was introduced in certain Abbeys in the earlier ages of Monachism, when any one of the brethren who had made most progress in holy things, was shut up alone that he might be entirely resigned to their contemplation. His cell was commonly in, or near the church, and was placed so as he could see the altar and join in the service; it was of stone, 12 feet square; and had three windows above, one looking towards the choir for taking the sacrament, another for receiving food, and a third for light covered with horn or glass; but the door was locked by his Abbot or Bishop, and was very often walled up.

this goodly shew of holy labours, the Viscount confessed unto us that it had been more often used for secret debate with divers of his own party, or as a cool bower and pleasant retreat in the heat of summer; wherein to quaff wine or indulge in light refection, than for those pious uses for which it seemed to have been framed. Even now there remained in it good store of sack and Rochelle wine; and I might not avoid noting unto myself, that in this case, as well as in divers others which I had seen, the guise of religion covered designs and enjoyments, having in them far more of earth than of heaven. Howbeit, in this time of Lord Lovel's distress, his use of the cell was both lawful and honest; and fervent were the thanks which he gave unto God and Our Lady for having brought him in safety thither. In the meantime Israel kindled a fire, and after we had taken some food, the good Noble, with much gratitude and haste, threw himself upon the rude couch which had been made there for the pious habitant of that cell; and which, hard and lowly as in truth it was, he now thought to be a bed of state, of much softness, and full of luxury.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DISSOLUTION OF FALLEN GREATNESS—AN INCIDENT AT THE QUEEN'S CORONATION.

Oh! ye mighty and pompous Lords, winning in the glory transitory of this unstable life,—and ye fierce and mighty Knights, so valiant in adventurous deeds of arms; behold! behold! this mighty champion, peerless of all Knighthood, see now how he lieth groveling upon the cold mould, being now so feeble and faint that sometime was so terrible.

LA MORT D'ARTHUR.

THUS did the noble fugitive soon fall into a heavy slumber, albeit he was laid upon so mean a couch; for his toil of travel and long sojourn in that most unhealthful lodging at Fiskerton-Ferry had wearied and weakened his frame and spirits, and made the hard resting-place of an Anchorite feel unto him like a bed of eider-down or soft furs. Our faithful friend Israel now withdrew himself in silence back unto his inn, though not without some fear that he might not easily explorate his way thither; and for mine own part, I folded me lightly in such garments as we had with us in that place, and stretched myself on the ground by the fire: yet could I not soon sleep, albeit I

was greatly wearied, because of the many sad meditations which flitted through my restless fancy.

I bethought me, as the virtuous old Philosopher said at his death, of how close kin are pain and pleasure in this world. For before me lay a noble Viscount, one who had been a King's favourite, and a most valiant soldier,—whose heart was now so overwhelmed with his misfortunes that it seemed to have sunken beneath them; and yet even he found a most sweet rest from all his toils and afflictions; his cares, his fears, and his debasements, being all forgotten in that infant-like slumber, which carried him so swiftly and quietly forward unto the morrow. I pondered, too, upon mine own strange fortunes; upon the lofty, and, as I now began to regard them, the groundless, hopes of the past, and how I might best provide me for the future. For myself, I was a fugitive, perchance for manslaughter, the thought whereof did oft-times greatly afflict my soul; although the swift succession of my toils and travels had, in some degree, blunted my remembrance of it. The good Israel of Castile would indeed befriend me so far as he might, but his own safety was not assured, seeing that he lived in continual doubt and fear of persecution; and as touching him with whom I was now sojourning, he could do nought for himself; for albeit I had sought his aid, yet was he at this time rather dependent upon mine. Whereupon I did conclude, that it would be full wise for me to leave him, now

that he was in a safe and convenient hiding-place amidst his own tenants, and seek out some means or employment to advance myself; since I could no longer hope ever to be seated upon the throne of my royal father, both because of the hatred borne unto him and his House, and for that I knew not who was my mother, and had no proof of being his son. Nevertheless, my claim would questionless be strong enow to call forth much suspicion and to put me in great jeopardy, so that methought as I was now of good stature and could weild a sword, I might become a soldier in some foreign land; either with the Duchess of Burgundy, who was well known to be no friend unto Harry Tudor, or with the Duke of Bretagne, against the French King Charles VIII., concerning whom divers Ambassadors had of late come into England.

Anon I thought of joining me unto those brave mariners, who about this time began to launch their daring keels, almost wherever they found winds to waft, or water to float them: some of whom had been in the service of King Richard, for that they were bold and skilled in war, as well as most adventurous shipmen. With them, I pondered on sailing to those rocks of snow and fire to be encountered in the Iceland voyage, to the fair shores of Machin's Island, to the rich coasts of the country of Afrike, and to the fearful Cape-Storm.

All these, and divers other plots for my future life,

glided swiftly across my restless fancy; yet could I decide upon nought but to quit the Lord Lovel with what haste I might. As I grew weary with such profitless musings, the gloomy cell, which was now only half-lighted by the decaying fire-brands, began to fade from my closing eyes, yet did my late wonted vigilance, and the uneasy posture wherein I lay, cause me ever and anon to start up, even at the very moment when forgetfulness was stealing over my drowsy senses; and until the first rays of the dawn streamed through the dim and narrow windows of our cell, I had enjoyed but brief and broken slumbers. Nevertheless, whilst my senses were thus suspended, I had a passing sweet vision from the which I did full loathly awaken; wherein, methought that I was living in a most pleasant and quiet retreat, with the Lady Bride, —such, indeed, as I did many years after behold her, when womanhood had clothed her in all it's beauties. I wot well that this was but a shadowy dream, though it was a marvellous one, and peradventure was not sent for nought; but it shed somewhat of a calm hope over my soul, and hath oft supported and strengthened me under the labours of my life, albeit I have since learned to understand it in a diverse sense from what I did at the time whereof I now speak.

But to go forward with my story. When the Lord Lovel awoke on the morrow, he manifested much joy at finding himself in so familiar and goodly a retreat; and when I disclosed unto him mine intent of depart-

ing from him and trying my fortune in some foreign land, he declared that it was likewise his purpose so to escape as soon as he might, and that we would either go in company, which should prove much unto mine advantage, or that he would shortly give me letters unto such of his intimates abroad as should greatly forward my desires. In thus much stead, did he say, he might still stand me; albeit at the same time he did entreat me to remain with him yet a while longer, for that his health was not what it had been; though that, he continued, was no marvel after what he had suffered in the cavern on the banks of Trent. And in sooth, unto my thinking, his bodily strength did seem then to have more of vigour than now might be seen in him; but this I deemed might perchance be but a melancholy fancy of mine own. Howbeit, when some two or three days had passed away, that which had at first been only painful surmise, grew into a sad and solemn reality; and I then suspected, what I did afterwards find to be indeed the truth, that his health had failed him from taking the damp from that couch in the cell, whereon he had so hastily and incautiously thrown him on the night of our arrival at Minster-Lovel. The good Viscount himself did also become of my belief in this matter, for that he said an unwonted tremour had invaded all his limbs, as though he were upon the point of a shrewd ague-fit; such indeed as he had seldom known, saving when he had been assailed by severe

cold or storm in night-watches or wet lodging.

Thus did I linger with the Lord Lovel from day to day, in sad expectation of what might chance unto him, and leading a most melancholy and full lonely life; our only change being sometimes to walk, with fearful and silent steps, through his ancient park at midnight. So fled that hapless Summer, and so passed the fall of Autumn, and even Winter drew nigh in dark November, yet did the Lord Lovel still continue as ill at ease as before; for, instead of amending, as he trusted, his sickness did most fearfully increase, and he at length declared that he should not long survive, unless some potent remedy might suddenly be provided for his distemper, whereof there was little hope in that solitary spot.

Upon this the faithful Jew, who, as in our former hiding-place at Fiskerton-Ferry, did often visit us in the night with supplies, proffered to fetch from Oxford City or Reading Town, such medicaments as were meet for the Viscount's disorder. But this he deemed would be of no avail; albeit he added with a heavy sigh, "if indeed Master Harold Cleghorn, the Chirurgeon of King-Street, near St. Peter's Abbey in Westminster, knew how it fares with me, perchance his skill might devise the means of restoring me, as it oft hath done before: but truly from no other hand may I look for such a blessing."

Unto this the Hebrew replied, "if that may indeed be, to him will I forthwith depart; for, old as I am,

I will not shrink from the journey to save the life of my lord and benefactor."

"Nay, good Israel," rejoined I, "by the faith of man that you shall never do whilst I stand by: let the youngest traveller take the road, for it were foul shame that one so aged as thou should set out on so distant a course, whilst I lingered slothfully behind; and so, my Lord, with your fair leave and direction, I will quit Minster-Lovel before day-break."

"Thou art a good youth, a passing good youth," interrupted the Jew, "but this travel is not meet for thee; and, moreover, thy strength and stoutness will better defend my Lord than mine aged and powerless arm, and therefore I pray thee to remain with him in this place." But unto this I answered, that I well knew and could endure the toil of travel, whilst only care and caution were required from him who should abide with the Lord Lovel, seeing that he lacked concealment rather than defence; for upon the closest secresy all his safety did depend: since, were he once discovered by his numerous enemies, the weakest and strongest arm would be alike unavailing. Thus would I in no wise be staid from this journey, not even by the Viscount himself, who fain would have ended our dispute by commanding that neither of us should *go*; since it would be peradventure of little benefit, and that we might bring back the healing remedies only time enough to behold him die. Nevertheless, I resolved that the essay should be made,

and so, having received the Lord Lovel's directions thereupon, I forthwith got me to horse, and was speedily once more on the road towards the great City; it being, as I now think, the night of Tuesday, the 20th of November.

It would be of small import to tell of the cares which did at this time surround me, or of the hazards which I encountered from suspicion or too close enquiry whilst I thus journied; and it will be thought enough if I set down, that my bodily strength held on unabated through all the confinement and travel which I underwent, and that my spirit yielded not unto the sorrows that oppressed me. My journey was performed in safety, but full often was mine heart made sad, and my soul wrathful, to hear of the covetous exactions and bloody executions which had followed upon the triumph of Harry Tudor at Stoke; albeit he had been wont to call my father tyrant. Yet, with all his fierceness, he had so much of that cunning which men deemed to be wondrous wisdom, that he affected to be passing gentle and unoppressive, even whilst cruelly despoiling and destroying those whom he called his subjects; unto whom the royal Richard, foully as he had been maligned, was ever like a benevolent and most noble Sovereign. The ferocious and evil doings of Harry Tudor, were moreover dissembled under the guise of pious devotion; yet, albeit he did outwardly seem anxious only to honour the Lord of Hosts who had made him a victor,

it might well be seen that he recked but little of the commands of Him, who would not that blood should be shed in wantonness or revenge, and who hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner. Thus, whilst he sent his proud and triumphant banner, as a thankful offering unto the Shrine of our Lady of Walsingham, he caused a full strict inquisition to be made after certain who had spread the report that his power at Stoke had been overthrown, that he might seize upon them or pursue them even unto the death.

But though the country was thus disordered, when I got me into London I found nought but stately rejoicings; since the doubts and fears of the late tumults had died away, and men's minds were filled with the royal triumphs which were then in daily progress. It was now told unto me, how the Coronation of the good Queen, Elizabeth of York, was no longer to be delayed; though, questionless, the wily Harry had been admonished therein by the dangers which he had of late escaped, for he had at length caused it to be proclaimed, that it should be solemnised at the Abbey of Westminster, upon the Feast of St. Catherine then next ensuing, being Sunday, the 25th day of November, two days after that whereon I again entered the City. I heard, moreover, how the King and his Consort had travelled in stately journey from the Court at Warwick unto London, where they were met by divers of the Commonalty thereof, taken from every craft, all on horseback, and full well and

honourably beseen in one livery: whiles the streets through which Harry Tudor rode,—for he left his Queen secretly at a house without Bishop's Gate, by St. Mary's Spital,—were fairly decked, having the other Citizens standing in goodly array and order to receive him. The Lady Elizabeth then went unto her lodging at Greenwich, but he continued unto Powle's at afternoon-tide, and at the western door thereof he alighted, being joined by many Bishops and Priests all in their robes; and there, forsooth, was Harry Tudor censed with the great censer of Powle's, by an Angel that seemed to come out of the roof, whilst the quire sang a solemn anthem and "*Te Deum laudamus,*" for joy of his late victory and prosperous coming into London. But of all this proud pageantry, I saw nought, and in truth it was unto me food for sad and bitter meditation, excepting that I rejoiced for the good Queen Elizabeth: but my heart sank within me in the same degree as those of other men beat higher, as I thought upon the fallen fortunes of such as had suffered defeat and ruin by the late triumph over the Yorkists, and the measureless exultation and pride of the Lancaster victor and his flatterers and followers.

I would fain have hied me both for counsel and lodging unto the house of Master St. Leger in the Sanctuary, but that I feared the doing so might again draw suspicion towards him, whom I had already placed in some jeopardy; and I therefore rested me

in the abode of the good Chirurgeon, Master Cleghorn, until he had carefully resolved upon the remedies proper for one in the condition of Lord Lovel. His dwelling was a dark and lofty house in King-street, looking unto the Abbey, and bore the sign of "the Balm-Tree of Judea." Well I wot that he was a most learned man in physics, and the art of curing wounds; and nothing like many of the Mediciners of this time, who pretended, by some vain spells and drugs, to make a wondrous remedy which they called "the Elixir of Life," to heal all diseases. Others, too, would juggle with metals, looking to turn the baser sorts into pure gold by Alchemy; but though Master Cleghorn was a right curious seeker into the hidden things of Nature for the aid of his art, and albeit his house was filled with divers marvellous plants and creatures, yet was he none of those losel impostors. I have not always found that men unto whom good offices have been done, have kept such lively remembrance thereof as this good Chirurgeon; more especially when their benefactors have fallen into distress, and the stream of their bounty hath been dried up by adversity. But Master Cleghorn now shewed himself right grateful unto the hapless Lord from whom I was a messenger, and told me that he would compound a most choice remedy, which, if the distemper were not too far gone, should work a swift cure upon him; in the mean space desiring me to lodge with him, and disport myself with the right royal pageants that were now in progress.

It may well be thought that I have little liking to set down the stately ceremonies of one, whom I have ever regarded as an usurper, but seeing that they rather pertained unto the Queen Elizabeth, who was of my House; that they do in part belong unto my story; and that posterity may be curious concerning them,—I have given this little touch of them which now followeth.

On the Friday next before St. Catherine's day,—being the morrow of that whereon I got me unto London,—the Queen's good Grace, royally apparelled and accompanied by the Lady Margaret, Harry Tudor's mother, and divers other great persons, both lords and ladies, richly clothed, came forward unto her Coronation from the Palace at Greenwich, by water. Herein were they attended by the chief Citizens of London, in barges freshly furnished with silken banners and streamers, richly wrought with the arms and devices of their crafts. In especial I marked one boat of most choice fancy, called "the Bachelors' Barge," passing all others, the which had a great red dragon spouting flames of fire into the Thames; whilst on every side were trumpets, clarions, and other minstrelsies, fitting unto the Queen's royal estate. So came she from Greenwich, and, landing at the Tower-wharf, entered the Tower, where Henry of Richmond seemed to welcome her in such a manner as made a very good sight unto all present.

The next day, being Saturday, in the afternoon

thereof, the Queen was again most royally attired in a kirtle of white cloth-of-gold of damask, and a mantle of the same furred with ermines, and fastened on her breast with a cordon of gold and silk with tassels. Her fair yellow hair hung unadorned down upon her back; and she had a golden circlet upon her head full richly garnished with precious stones. Thus went she from her Chamber of Estate, the Lady Cecil Wells, her sister, bearing her train, with great attendance of noables. The litter, wherein she progressed from the Tower, and so through the City of London unto Westminster, was covered with the same cloth-of-gold of damask, and had large pillows made of the like and stuffed with down, laid about her to support her. Over her litter was borne a canopy, or pall, likewise of golden cloth, having four gilded staves ever supported by as many Knights; there being twelve appointed to bear them in due order unto Westminster. Then came her Grace's horse of estate, led by the Master thereof; with her six henchmen, upon fair white palfreys harnessed with red and white cloth-of-gold, richly embroidered with suns and white roses. Next them followed two chariots covered with the like and set upon horses, in the first whereof sat the Duchess of Bedford, and the Lady Cecil Wells, the Queen's sisters; and in the second, the Duchess of Suffolk, and the Countess of Oxford, and Elizabeth's other sister, the Duchess of Norfolk: but the Lady Bride I saw not on this day. The goodly train was

closed by the Queen's Ladies and Gentlewomen, according to their degree, some riding in chariots and others on white palfreys, all most richly arrayed in cloth-of-gold, robes of crimson velvet, and gold chains.

I may not in ordinary compass, tell how the streets through which she should pass, were hung with cloths of tapestry and arras, or how West-Cheap was bedecked with silks and gold velvets: how the Crafts of London, in their liveries, stood all along the way from the Tower unto Powle's; with a marvellous sight of people in the streets, houses, and windows: how her Grace was met in divers parts of the City by fair children, some being arrayed like unto angels, and others like virgins, who sang sweet songs as she passed by: or how richly were clad the Knights and Nobles who rode with her in that stately progress;—but I will rather at once pass away unto her Coronation upon the morrow.

Full early upon the morn of the holy day she came forth of Westminster Hall, having lodged the night before in the Palace thereof,—upon a fair and high scaffold covered with new ray-cloth of purple, whereon she might well be seen of all present. This reached from the gate of the said Hall, unto a stage in St. Peter's Abbey, where she was to be crowned; beside which there were sundry other scaffolds around it, hung with pictures, tapestry, and arras, for such as were above the common sort to behold the procession. In especial I marked one goodly little gallery, set up

about midway, well bedecked with cloth-of-gold, and covered with a rich canopy, wherein were seated divers ladies, who seemed of such great estate, that I marvelled much that they were not in high place in the procession. One of the foremost was a most lovely and gentle child of noble mien and stature, though, perchance, not passing some seven years of age. She was in a fair glistering robe of silver-tissue, and had mild and clear eyes of bright blue, and hair of paly gold; methought much more beauteous than the Queen's, unto whom she bore a wondrous resemblance. As I stood in the crowd near this spot, I demanded of some that were about me who those ladies might be; whereunto one answered that they were the Queen's mother and younger sisters, from the Abbey of Bermondsey, whom the King of his grace had permitted to behold her Coronation, though he would in no wise have them to take any part in the same; and that she who sat in the front was the Lady Bride, who should become a nun when she was of age to be professed.

Methought, before I knew this, that there was some secret charm which as it were drew me unto that fair one, and riveted my sight upon her, the which was now fully explained; whilst my mind did at once recall every thing that Master St. Leger and Sir Gilbert De Mountford had said touching her and myself, and mine own ardent desires towards her. Now I saw that she was even more beauteous than my fancy had

pictured her, and, in truth, the fairest of her family; and thereupon I pressed as nigh as I might unto the scaffold whereon she sat, the better to gaze upon her features: though mine heart sank within me as I thought upon the hopeless distance which adverse fortune had cast between us, albeit I was her near kinsman, and of birth not less royal.

I will here say nothing of the gallant procession unto the Abbey, of the Esquires, Knights, Peers, and Heralds; of the Prelates in their copes, nor the monks of Westminster in their albs; of the golden orb, crowns, and sceptres, borne by the Nobles, nor of the princely habits of all;—since they who list to read of them shall find them chronicled in story, and pictured in divers books of the Heralds. After all these had passed in stately march before us, came the Queen in a kirtle and mantle of purple velvet, broidered with gold and furred with ermines; having a circlet of gold and rich gems upon her hair, and her train borne by the Lady Cecil. Next her followed the Duchess of Bedford and others, in mantles and surcoats of scarlet velvet, furred and powdered, with golden circlets on their heads; but these had not well gone by, when there was so mighty a rush of the crowd behind, inordinately pressing to cut away the ray-cloth whereon the Queen had walked, as memorials of that stately pageant, that divers persons were overthrown and even trampled to death in the presence, and the order

of the procession was all broken and distroubled.* Nor was this the worst, for the crowd pressed forward with such force, as to unsettle, and even to break down, certain of the pillars which supported that scaffold wherein were seated the Queen's mother and the Lady Bride; causing some to utter a cry of fear as the gallery trembled beneath them. Then did most of the press quickly retreat, as fearing that it should suddenly fall upon them; but others, whereof I was one, hastily pressed forward and ascended the scaffold to rescue those noble ladies from their most perilous condition. As we mounted thereon it shook fearfully beneath us, and, peradventure from the increased weight, a part at once gave way and fell, close unto that whereto I had rushed to save the Lady Bride; and even the remainder was shaking upon it's frail supporters. The brave and noble child had uttered no sound of fear, though her cheek was somewhat pale when I approached her; and only saying unto her "Lady, trust yourself with me, I am of gentle blood, and will pledge my life for your safety,"

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* The reader will remember that this circumstance is also mentioned in a contemporary record of Queen Elizabeth's Coronation preserved in manuscript in the Cottonian Library; and printed in Leland's Collectanea, and Ives' Select Papers relating to English Antiquities. Several other parts of the above description are also supported by the same authorities.

—I took her forthwith in mine arms, and sprang with her from the gallery as the last of it fell!

I had thought full lightly of the danger whereunto I had exposed myself, for that I would willingly have bought the proud joy of bearing such a burthen with far greater peril; but the shock had taken away the senses of the Lady Bride, and when we reached the ground she had swooned in mine arms. Howbeit, as I still supported her, and did what I might to restore her fainted spirits, certain of the guard and others came up, and roughly demanded of me how I presumed to come into such presence as her's; whereunto I replied that I had done it by right of courage, for that they had given back even before the scaffold fell, and also by right of rank, for that I was of much better blood than such base grooms as they: adding, withal, that I meant to bear her unto her royal mother, and so bade them stand back and let me pass onward. But this they would in no wise hear of, and whilst some took her from me and carried her unto the Palace, others,—because my habit was but coarse and mean like one of low estate,—flouted and reviled me with much foul contumely; telling me that I was already well rewarded in not being sent unto the guard-house for my presumption, albeit I might yet have farther guerdon, if I listed to go me down unto the King's kitchen.

Hereupon, with much anger and scorn in my face and speech, I quitted the crowd in that place, and

hastily returned again unto Master Cleghorn's; not coveting to behold any more of those flaunting pageants, or the costly banquet which followed them. It was small merit, I trow, for Harry Tudor to exceed his predecessors in wanton feasting, yet was it made matter of much admiration, that the Queen's courses had Feisaunts-royal, swans, cranes, pikes, and peacocks; with a Subtlety, having ballads written therein, and castles of jelly made in temple-wise. It was moreover said, how that the Abbey of Westminster was pourtrayed there unto the very life, being beset with divers beasts and birds, and fighting-men on horseback and on foot, some dancing with ladies, and others tilting with sharp spears as in a tournament; all being made of spice-plate painted and gilt. Yet of this I neither saw nor regarded aught, but early in the morning of the fourth day after my last coming unto London, I took my departure therefrom with the good Chirurgeon's medicines for the Lord Lovel. By the second night after, my travel was ended, and it should have been even sooner done, but that I was full cautious of journeying through the parts lying nearest to Minster-Lovel in the broad face of day; whereupon I purposely tarried until after sunset, at a hostel on the road-side some twelve miles distant. But when I again got me on horseback, I rode forward at a great pace, and within two hours saw myself at the end of my journey. I now hastily bestowed my horse at his own inn, being full impa-

tient to declare unto the Lord Lovel how I had performed his charge, and to impart unto him the healing drugs which had been compounded for his distemper by Master Cleghorn.

As I drew nigh unto the secret cell, and wound through those hidden passages, which led unto the sad retreat of fallen greatness,—albeit until now I had looked to find therein Israel and the sick Noble as I had left them;—I felt a strange and sudden misgiving overcloud my mind, in truth I wot not why, and I did almost fear to learn that their hiding-place had been discovered, and that I should hear in it the brawling voices of Harry Tudor's soldiers. Howbeit, this dread was abated by the deep silence which prevailed therein, and shewn to be only the sickly fear of an over-anxious spirit. But even whilst I felt my doubts to be all groundless, the next moment that very stillness seemed unto me to be full of alarm; for I half deemed that some foemen might be hidden within the cell, and that such unnatural silence might be only the surer to ensnare any one who approached that retreat. Nevertheless I still went forward, and upon approaching the very entrance of the chamber, I heard a faint and broken voice exclaiming, as if in the devotion of the last hours of life, "*De profundis clamavi, ad Te, Domine, exaudi vocem meam: Fiant aures tuæ intendentes in vocem deprecationis meæ!*" whereupon I hastily pressed forward, and came suddenly in sight of a new scene of sorrow.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE DEATH OF A NOBLE SOLDIER.

——————— Tell me,
How have you pass'd the time you wanted victuals?
——Very hardly.

DAVENPORT'S KING JOHN AND MATILDA.

The illustrious warriors who found themselves wasting by some lingering illness, were not always content barely to excuse their fate: they often availed themselves of the few moments that were yet remaining, to shake off life by a way more violent or glorious.—But if none of these reliefs were afforded, and especially when Christianity had banished these cruel practices, the heroes consoled themselves at least by putting on complete armour as soon as they found their end approaching; thus making, as it were, a solemn protest against the kind of death to which they were forced involuntarily to submit.

MALLET'S NORTHERN ANTIQUITIES.

WHEN that I had thus re-entered the cell, I saw none of the foes which my troubled fancy had looked for in that place, the Viscount being there alone, and seated on the very same spot whereon I had last seen him; but although I looked anxiously round for the Hebrew, yet was Israel no where to be seen. The chamber was now full dark, saving the red flickering of a few dying fire-brands near the Lord Lovel,

which cast their light upon a face in which the decaying spark of life seemed as near it's departure, and threw into most mournful shadow his ghastly looks, whereon distress, famine, and death, seemed to have wrought wild work since I had gazed on him before. His eyes had now lost all their martial brightness, and were glazed and dim, and there was that keen sharpness in his features and limbs which is the forerunner of the last hour; but though his voice was weak and hollow, and his utterance slow, yet was there now about him a holy calmness and piety, which seemed to shew that he had learned better how to live or die within the past week, than in all the years of his life beside.

When I drew so near him as that he might well note that some one approached, he said, "Ha! who cometh there?—But it skills not now, for a dying man fears no earthly enemies; and blessed be God who hath given me again to behold the face of a fellow-creature! What! is it indeed thyself, my kind Plantagenet?"

His altered speech, his changed countenance, and his wasted form, had so riveted my looks upon him, that sorrow and wonder had partly enchained my tongue, and I could not on the instant make reply; but, at length somewhat recovering, I said,—"Aye, my good Lord, it is indeed your poor friend, Plantagenet; who, God be praised! findeth you still living and in safety; and hath brought with him

such healing medicines from the good Chirurgeon as shall work a speedy cure upon your fainting frame."

"Nay, good Richard," answered the Viscount, full sadly smiling and speaking in a low voice, "that may not be;—thy kind ministration cometh all too late, since I wot that physic is but for the quick, and I do already deem myself as one of the dead!"

I heard him with much sadness, though with little amaze after having beheld him, yet, being willing to support his hopes, I replied, "Not so, my noble Lord, since I can well trust that there yet remain for you many years of life and honour."

"I pray God, Plantagenet," returned he, "that thine own hopes, whatever they be, may have better foundation and fulfilment, than they ever can which thy kindly spirit now breathes for one, on whom the cold grasp of Death is already laid, and whose last hour is close at hand."

"Oh! say not so, mine honoured Lord," replied I, bending over him and taking his thin wasted hand, whereon were hanging the clammy dews of Death,—"say not so, since I have brought with me certain most potent and reviving cordials, compounded by your approved and faithful Chirurgeon, which shall full quickly bring you back unto life."

"Alas!" responded he, faintly, "the physician's skill cometh all too late; since I may now say with holy Job, '*spiritus meus attenuabitur, dies mihi breviabuntur, et solum mihi superest sepulchrum:* my breath

is diminished, my days are shortened, and the grave alone remaineth unto me.—That aid, which, timely supplied, perchance might have restored my strength, will do but little for me now.—Let the will of God be done!—yet have I thought, Plantagenet, that if thou hadst not left me, or if any of our Christian Faith had been near me, peradventure I had even at this time had hope of life: but as it is, abandoned by the Jew, and——"

"Holy Saints!" exclaimed I in terror and wonder, for now mine amazement had suddenly increased much more than before, "what mean you, my good Lord? hath Israel indeed deserted you, or done aught to call forth your anger?"

"That," replied the Viscount, "I may not truly aver, seeing that I am now at the point to die, and have long known him faithful; so that perchance I should rather lament for some calamity having befallen him through his fidelity unto me. Yet may I tell thee, good Richard, that since the night of thy departure hath he never returned hither!"

In very sooth, I could scarcely think that mine ears heard aright as the Lord Lovel thus spake, or when he continued, in such terms as moved both mine heart and eyes to pity him, to relate unto me how he had been left wholly without sustenance throughout five of the days which had passed away since I left him! I then hastened to take from my pouch some food which I provided at the hostel where I last stopped, and

placing it before the Viscount entreated him to eat thereof; telling him that I would eftsoons go forth for more, and to enquire what I might touching Israel of Castile. But unto this the Lord Lovel replied with a sad smile, declaring that he would no more taste of food on earth, having taken his last morsel as the Blessed Viaticum, which should prepare him for his departure from the flesh: he added, moreover, that he would not have me quit him again, for that he had much desired to see me ere his death, and he would fain speak unto me whilst utterance was left him.

He then related unto me, albeit with much difficulty of speech, how that, when his food was nigh spent, and, after long waiting, he found that Israel returned not unto him with more at his wonted hour,—he began, in impatient mood, to lament that he had entrusted his life to the keeping of an infidel Jew: since he did well believe that he had wantonly left him to die. His infirmities had also much increased from his sickness, so that he might in no wise have gone forth himself; and, as his little store of provision lessened, he looked forward unto a lingering death, without human creature near him to aid him in his last hours. Deeming that he had now no hope of escape from such sad fate, he bethought him of addressing himself unto the holy duties proper unto that solemn time; thereupon taking up one of those tomes, which, as I have noted, lay scattered about the cell, thinking it to be

some pious Hours or Offices, or other book of Christian prayers. But it was, in truth, a full devout and ghostly *Treatise of the Imitation and Following of the Blessed Life of Our merciful Saviour Christ Jesus, and of the Contemning of the World:* the which godly book was written first in Latin by that most learned and christian doctor, Johannes Gersenus, Abbot of the Benedictine Monastery of St. Stephen at Verceil, albeit it hath been falsely attributed unto other authors.* The Lord Lovel now remembered him that it had been done into English at his command, by Master Bernard de Chadlington, sometime his Chaplain, and Vicar of St. Kenelm's Church at Minster-Lovel; who was greatly enamoured of that divine treatise.

In the time of the Viscount's prosperity he little recked for aught of book-lore, since I wot that both

* It will doubtless be remembered that the very celebrated *Imitation of Christ*, has been assigned to Thomas à Kempis, John Gerson, Chancellor of Paris University, and the Abbot Gersen mentioned above; beside some other authors of far less probability. For several reasons, perhaps Gersen may be most safely regarded as the real writer of the treatise; but his claim being strenuously supported by the Benedictine monks, against the advocates of Kempis, who was of the Order of St. Augustine,—was probably the reason for the assertion in the text, Richard Plantagenet having been educated in the Benedictine monastery at Ely. The passage subsequently cited from the *Imitation of Christ* will be found in Book I. Chap. xxv.

his heart and his treasure were in camp and Court; and therefore the pious tome of the Abbot Gersenus was cast aside for sword or charger, hawk or hound, or, in brief, for aught of worldly pastime or employment. But in the day of his adversity and hiding, long after the good Chaplain had gone unto his rest, when his labours were all forgotten, lo! his little book came forth in wondrous wise to awaken the soul of him for whom it was first penned, even at the eleventh hour. As the Lord Lovel sate in that lonely cell, thinking upon death, and I ween well nigh spent with famine, he takes me up this holy treatise deeming it to be a missal; and, presently opening it, he lights upon these blessed words, which seemed to speak unto him with the voice of an angel.

"O! if we myght contynue in thys lyfe wythoute bodyly refecyon, as eatyng and drynkyng, sleepyng, or any other corporeal wants; and take heede only unto holy medytacyons, and ghostlye feedyng and refreshyng of our souls; then shoulde we be muche more happye, than we be now, in serving and attendyng more for bodyly good than spyrytual profyte. When man once cometh unto thys perfecyon, then seeketh he consolacyon of no creature; then begynneth he to have a spyrytual ayde in God, when that he is contente wyth every fortune, as well wyth adversyte as prosperyte, conformying and referrying all hys worschype unto God, to serve and to obey hys wyll."

"As I read over these devout sentences," continued the dying Viscount, "a new light suddenly brake in upon my benighted spirit, and shewed me that I was in the condition of *that* soul; being freed from all the cares of this world, and almost launched away into the next. I was now regarded as one dead, or as a fugitive in the camp and a traitor in the Court, and all too much shaken by sickness ever again to appear in either; yet did I know full little how to turn me unto a holy life and the service of God. Oh! good Plantagenet, had I but fought against the Fiend in mine own heart, but half so stoutly as I have done battle in mortal strife,—had I but shewed unto the King of Kings but half the duteous loyalty which I ever gave unto thy father,—I had not now been left thus desolate, defamed, and out of suits with fortune; I had not now had all my ghostly labours to do, when that I have neither strength nor space wherein to perform them!"

"Good, my Lord," responded I, "you should yet be of good cheer, since I have heard it spoken from holy St. Austin, that we read of one man who was saved at the last hour, that none may despair; though but of one, that none should presume."

"Truly, young Plantagenet," hereunto replied the Viscount, "I am of good cheer, nay, I am full merry; for albeit I have fasted long and sadly, yet do I trust this night to banquet most richly in Paradise!—Howbeit, as the time when I shall speak and thou shalt

hear is hastily passing away, let me go on whilst life is left unto me.—Hunger had now assailed me like a mighty foe, and sleeping and waking, night and day, I vainly looked around and clamoured for food; almost maddened at finding it came not, or that what I saw and ate of in my dreams was not real and substantial. I held Israel to be a savage and unfeeling traitor, deeming that only one of his abhorred race would have left his ancient benefactor, alone and powerless upon a bed of sickness, without some effort to administer unto his sorrow."

"In good sooth, my Lord," interposed I at this place, "I would not offend you, but yet I wot well that you erred in this matter: since that man hath too deeply felt the shaft of calamity and persecution himself, not to have compassion upon others. I was left wounded, and, perchance, dying, upon the field at Bosworth, unknown and disregarded of all, since mine only friend lay a bloody corse thereon:—and, but for the humanity of Israel and his late virtuous spouse, I had not now lived to stand by the couch of another, or to speak in vindication of my benefactor. And think not, I pray you, good my Lord, that if he be not illumined by the Christian Faith, he is therefore abandoned for ever; since we who adore a God who will not that *any* should perish, may not rashly condemn even a *Jew* of virtuous life and warm and charitable heart."

"Thou hast a generous and kindly soul, Richard

Plantagenet," rejoined the Lord Lovel, "and unto somewhat of this did mine own thoughts arrive, after that my spirit had been softened and purified by much reading in that holy book of the Imitation of Our Lord; and another little tome of certain texts of the Sacred Scriptures, translated into English by Master John de Trevisa.* In the pondering upon these, I seemed, as it were, to forget time and to lose mine infirmity; and they so wrought within me, that first came sorrow and penitence into mine heart, and tears from mine eyes, such as I had never shed before. And anon came a godly joy and illumination, which made me almost to leap as I read when I began to understand how true were the words, which I had heard spoken from the blessed 'Vangil, '*Non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbo qui procedit de ore Dei:*' man liveth not by bread alone, but by every word which cometh forth of the mouth of God. For albeit I was still shrewdly an-hungered, yet had I now good store of the Bread of Life; and feeding upon that I freely forgave my death unto the Hebrew, and

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* This collection was made towards the close of the fourteenth century, and is sometimes said to have included the whole of the Scriptures; though it more probably contained only a few texts which were painted on the walls of the Chapel in Berkeley Castle, executed by command of Lord Thomas De Berkeley. Trevisa was a celebrated translator of numerous works, and Vicar of Berkeley in the County of Gloucester.

thought me already at the gate of Heaven!—But now—my strength indeed faileth,—and I must hasten to close. On the morning of yesterday, I chanced to find a crust, full hard and mouldy and black with age, such as in the days of my pride I would not have cast unto a hound that I held in any favour; on the which, howbeit, I now seized with thankfulness and joy, eating it with much devotion, as the Blessed Sacrament sent unto me before my death: for I say unto thee, Richard, that until I partake of the food of Angels, there shall no other pass between my dying lips!"

Albeit I saw that it was now altogether in vain, I could not but assay as I might to support the sinking Lord Lovel; still declaring mine earnest hope that he was not yet so shrewdly distempered as he judged of himself, nor that food and the remedies which I bore, might not render him good service. "Nay," answered he again, "that cannot be; for the cold damp of my former lodging, and that which I took upon my first coming hither, hath stricken unto my very heart, and brought on a fever of such consuming fierceness, that nothing now can allay it. The wise in physic do indeed tell, that much fasting will presently starve a fever out of man's frame, but it hath not been so with me; though, peradventure, my sinful anger against Israel when I deemed that he had so foully deserted me, hath shaken me as shrewdly as lack of sustenance. Yet be this as it will, my sickness hath now risen unto a height as no medicines can stay it;

albeit I bless God that I have found a sure and faithful Physician for my soul."

Hereupon I did urge unto him hope of life no longer, seeing that his pallid and sunken cheek suddenly turned paler, shewing that he was now nigh unto the death, for which he was so well fitted: but, that his worldly desires should be fulfilled in as much as they might, I demanded of him, in great sorrow, if there were aught wherein I could yet serve him.

"Mourn not for me, noble youth," responded he, "though thou hast so gentle and kindly a heart, that I feel much sadness that I cannot guerdon thy love towards me; or give thee aught but thanks for thy many and courteous services. Yet, to be still more thy debtor, there is one thing,—and that of some hazard,—which I would fain have thee do for me when I am departed; the which, only my long-increasing infirmity hath kept me from braving for myself.—It is to ascend the secret stair out of this cell, which will lead thee into a broad fire-place in mine own chamber above; wherein, beneath the middle window, thou wilt find a panel in the wall, sculptured with the devices of my House.—Firmly press down the body of the ramping lion on the 'scutcheon, and a spring will be loosened that holds up the shield, which, falling down, will discover unto thee a little secret closet. Therein is a steel casket containing some gold, and divers letters from certain partisans of the House of York, who are now living and unsuspected, touching

a rising against Harry of Lancaster.—These I charge thee to take forth, and destroy as surely and as speedily as thou mayest, that none may hereafter find them, and bring others into infamy or death. For the gold which is in the casket, take it unto thyself, good Richard, I give it thee all, and would it were far greater.—Now—Farewell!—may the blessing of a dying friend rest upon thee!—and I lack only a Confessor, that I too might have absolution and benediction."

Unto this I replied, that I would assuredly undertake his trust, and, if he so desired, would go forth to seek him a Confessor; but he answered me that he might not then permit it, for that death was dealing so shrewdly with him, that he should eftsoons depart. "And thou forgettest," added he, "that by thus doing thou wouldest hazard thine own safety; and, perchance, that of the holy man who should come unto me. And in sooth," he faintly continued, "though I would fain be shriven and absolved by the Church, that so my spirit might be the better fitted to appear at the Throne of God, yet do I well trust that I am so accounted in Heaven, unto which I have devoutly confessed; and so may pass away in hope, albeit unhouselled and unannealled with the Sacraments of Confession or Extreme-Unction."

"In truth, my good Lord," answered I, who was inwardly praying for him upon my rosary, "I do well believe it, and my poor orisons shall not be wanting that your spirit may rise speedily unto glory."

"Thanks, thanks, good Richard," returned the Viscount, "and if no other prayers be heard for me whilst my soul is parting from her clay, if no dirge be sung over my corse, yet will I not faint even in the shadow of death; nor fear that the lack of priestly rites, all sacred though they be, shall mar my joyful entrance into Paradise."

Upon this, as it were exhausted by so much speaking, he gradually sank back, grasping my hand, and closing his eyes: so that I drew in my breath with anxious dread, thinking that his last moment was indeed come. Yet whilst I thus bent sorrowfully over him, his spirit came unto him again, and he reared him with even more seeming strength than before: but, from the glazed look of his eyes, I well deemed that it was but the last brief and sudden kindling up of the taper of life, which was speedily to sink down into an immortal darkness.

Howbeit, for some short space he was again himself, and said unto me, "'Tis in vain, Plantagenet, 'tis in vain; not all thy kind offices can now save thy dying friend, or even give him a sepulchre when he shall be no more. Yet, though God hath willed it thus, I pray thee help me to don my grave-clothes, the which thou wilt find in yonder chest; being the knightly suit I ever wore both at Court and in the battle. — So,—'tis well—good Richard,—but haste thee, for even now I feel my blood ceasing to flow—there,—my surcoat of arms, and my helm upon my

head—that thus apparelled, as Lovel was wont to be in the day of his power, when they who live in after-times shall haply find his wasted limbs and mouldered form, in this secret place, which hath been his cell and sepulchre,—they may truly know who and what he was when living; nor confound the reliques of a Lovel and a soldier, with the ashes of the ignoble dead."

I hastened to fulfil his request and speedily clothed him as he desired, and when he was so habited he thanked me, and said he felt him more at ease; not that his sickness had in aught abated, but that he was now clothed in the only shroud which those of his House were ever wont to wear. Upon my demanding of him if there were aught else wherein I might pleasure him, he replied, "nou[illegible]t, my most constant friend, but this—that thou wouldest bring hither yonder cross, that I may kiss it, and die in grasping the sign of our salvation.—So—now set it upon the table before me, with the holy books which have so often soothed me in mine hours of loneliness and sorrow, and have dressed my soul for it's final departure: the which may indeed tell them that in future days shall light upon my bones, that Lovel died a Christian as well as a Noble and a Soldier."

When I had forthwith performed all that he desired, he once more assayed to speak, albeit very faintly, and said,—"So,—this is well,—and now the courses being all set to sea, wherefore should the

barque tarry longer? or, in good sooth, why should not the worn-out shallop which hath been so long tossed upon the wild waters, make at once for the haven where she may safely cast her anchor for ever?"

Such was the Lord Lovel's tranquillity and gentle resignation in his last hours; the which, though sweet to behold and glorious to remember, still had in them so much of sadness, that tears fell from mine eyes, and I mourned bitterly that one so rich in grace and dignity should presently cease to be upon the earth. He marked mine emotion, and full kindly counselled me to lay aside my sorrows, seeing that his had reached their termination; and that I should dry the tears which dimmed mine eyes, that I might well mark how to close up l... His tongue did now begin altogether to fail him, and his eyes looked set in his head as if their sight were gone; whilst his words came thick and obscure, so that I might scarcely hear them. Yet was his look high and stately, and his face lighted up with that unearthly lustre, which spake eloquently of a peace of mind, that his speech could but imperfectly give utterance to. But full soon came the last solemn change, wherein the dark shades of Death invaded his visage, and his sense of existence seemed to depart. Yet even in that moment of dissolution, did I pray him to give me some sign if his hope in Heaven were still good; whereupon he grasped the crucifix with wondrous power,

and faltered out a part of the dying words of the holy Stephen,—"*Domine—Jesu—suscipe*——" I listened for some moments joyfully, though anxiously, for the end thereof;——but on again looking towards the face of the Lord Lovel, I full soon perceived that I was alone!

CHAPTER XV.

A FOREIGN ADVENTURER AND SPY ENCOUNTERED—RECRUITING IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY—AND FIFTEEN YEARS OF EXILE FROM ENGLAND.

Where hast thou served?
May it please you, Sir, in all the late wars of Bohemia, Hungaria, Dalmatia, Poland; where not, Sir? I have been a poor servitor by sea and land, any time this fourteen years, and followed the fortunes of the best commanders in Christendom.

* * * * * *

Is it possible that thou shouldest disguise thyself so as I should not know thee?

BEN JONSON'S EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR.

I like thee well; wilt thou forsake thy fortune,
——— And follow me?
I am a Soldier, and now bound to France.

SHAKSPEARE.

So died the good Knight, Francis, the ninth Lord, and first Viscount, Lovel;—yet seemingly without any touch of pain, and so peacefully and silently, that even at the very moment of his departure, I knew not indeed that all was over. Howbeit, I might not long remain in doubt, but speedily saw that he was gone from this earth, and that I had now only to close his eyes, unto the which I sadly addressed myself. He had so orderly settled himself to die, that there was little left for me to perform for him; yet did I compose him so, that he should have the semblance of

one who rested after the labours of a weary day, with his head inclined upon his hand. In all things, therefore, did I fulfil his dying desires, so that if ever men should discover and open his last retreat and burial-place,* his wishes shall assuredly come to pass; inasmuch as that none will ever deem him to have been of low degree, albeit mischance denied his bones a sepulchre in holy ground,

This solemn duty done, as it now grew towards morning, I bethought me of entering the chamber whereof he had spoken, and taking thence the casket he had charged me with, whiles the day was yet young; for that I now desired to depart from that sad cell, deeming it bootless to remain there longer, since all that had kept me therein had left it for ever: and I felt me no more bound by duty or liking to stay with

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* This discovery did not take place until the year 1708, when, in laying a new chimney at Minster-Lovel, a large vault or room was found beneath; in which appeared the entire skeleton of a man sitting at a table with books, &c. before him, whilst in another part of the chamber was a cap, the whole being in a decayed and mouldering state. It is also sometimes added, that the vault contained several barrels and jars which had held his stores; but the former part of this account rests on the witness and authority of John Manners, third Duke of Rutland, who related it in the hearing of William Cowper, Esq. Clerk of the Parliament, on May 8th, 1728; by whom it is preserved in a letter dated Hertingfordbury Park, August 9th, 1737.

that poor and lifeless dust, as the jewel being now gone, the sordid case which had enclosed it was no longer worth the watching.

So forth I went from the cell up the little secret winding stair, at the top whereof I found a strong door, which opened with a very hard spring upon one side of a wide and ancient hearth, behind a high settle of carved and blackened oak. So cunningly was it hidden, that no man might ever have discovered it, unless the device had been shewn unto him; for that the portal was formed of the stones whereof the fire-place was built set in an oaken frame. The chamber into which it led, was one of much state and richness, although it was now ruined and despoiled; partly by decay of years, and partly by the rude soldiery who had been placed therein upon the supposed death of the Lord Lovel. The 'broidered azure hangings were now torn and falling piecemeal from the walls, the goodly painted window was broken, and the fair carved-work was on all sides battered and defaced; yet did I find the sculptured panel, of which I was in quest, unsuspected and undefaced beneath that curious oriel-window, some panes whereof looked into our cell. But in the chamber unto which it did rightly belong, it formed a fair and broad bay, fitting to be set out with high stands of plate at a banquet, or yield pleasant pastime towards the park, seeing that it opened on to a stone gallery or terrace without, of little height above the green-sward thereof.

I paused not long to note these things, or to mark the desolate and melancholy condition of the dead Viscount's Chamber of Estate; both because the sight thereof made me full sad, and for that I well knew that I must speed me back again through the cell to close up each entrance as securely as I might: and therefore, after looking cautiously around me, I hastened unto the panel, opened it with a trembling hand, and soon had the steel casket safe within my bosom. I had again closed up that secret cabinet, and was once more passing quickly towards the hearth, when a strong and mournful blast of November's wind, swept in from the gallery through the broken oriel-window, and, mightily shaking the chamber wherein I then was, suddenly shut the secret door with a clap of wondrous loudness; the spring thereof locking itself so firmly, that all in vain I assayed to open or even to discover it again.

Whilst I stood thus perplexed, and pondering how I might best escape from the jeopardy into which that mischance had thrown me, I heard the sound of footsteps approaching the chamber, whereupon I also came forward, either to leap from the window, if space were given me so to do, or to brave all hazards as I might; but in nowise to discover the passage whereby I had entered, nor even to be seen near the secret door, lest others should find the means to open it and so descend unto the cell. He who presently came in unto the apartment, was a tall and stout man

of a martial air, as though he had sometime been wont to bear arms; and indeed he was now habited in the coarse and soiled dress, and dull iron of a common soldier. His face methought wore a look of craft and reckless boldness, as if he had been one of those wandering foreign lance-men, who follow any leader, and do any deed for gain, the which were of old oft-times brought into England to fill up the King's armies, though much to the molestation and disquiet of the realm; and of a truth he was no other than a stout and subtle lanz-knecht, who could well keep him by spur and spear, wherever there was tumult, war, or spoil.

I did thus curiously look upon his features, for that they seemed unto me as if I had more than once seen them afore; of the which I was full soon convinced, when he accosted me in a mocking voice with —"Ha! what my young master! art thou here too? methinks we meet full often of late; and which way might you get entrance, my forward stripling?"

"Truly," answered I, with such boldness as I could best assume on the instant, "truly, it asks but small warrant to enter a house where there is neither lord in the chamber nor lacquey in the hall; and so I even wandered hither, and was gazing awhile upon this old apartment; but for our often meeting, in good sooth I wot but little."

"Aye, marry," responded the gibing Soldier, "that I trow is because you are like most other great men

who forget their friends; natheless, I know ye as well here as at Ely Monastery, or Leicester Castle, or in West-Cheap when the City-Watch is marching, or in the Red Rose hostel of Gideon Staples at Elveston;—when some were in shrewd hazard of being hung for a traitor, had not I been at hand to cover their safe withdrawing."

Unto this I exclaimed in great amazement, "what sayest thou? wert thou the Clerk then who told me of the overthrow at Stoke, and shewed me where Israel of Castile was waiting for me?"

"Aye, by St. Nicholas! was I, my young springald," responded the rude Soldier, "for that I was his debtor and had so covenanted with him; and I ever keep true touch to mine employers."

"Scarcely so, methinks," answered I, "if, as I take it, you are one Bernard Schalken, a Brabanter, who served Sir Gilbert De Mountford, and knavishly left and betrayed him, with certain letters that were entrusted unto his charge."

"Content thee, content thee, stripling, it skills not what thou thinkest of that act," responded the Lanceman, "though I be in sooth Bernard Schalken; howbeit, as I would anon fain have thee frank with me, I will first be so with thee, therefore open thine ears and take this lesson from an old soldier and traveller, if thou shouldest have life given thee to use it. I was born to a hardy lanz-knecht, on a march in Germany; though I speak you most tongues, having

served in most countries. Now you may well wot that we Flemings and Almaines, who live by spur and spear, must be little dainty as to what lord we will serve, though we be true as blade to pomel when we have once engaged us, until our paction be out: so Sir Gilbert De Mountford was overseen, in that, when my time was up, he struck no new bargain with me. Thus might I leave him, yet with a clear faith, and take service with King Harry, who held me to spy and peer after such forward Yorkists as thyself; and I may now tell thee, that another day in London after thy brawl in West-Cheap, had seen thee in hold, young Sir, with your consorts, Sir Gilbert De Mountford, Master St. Leger, and others of the like sort."

Then did I full anxiously demand of Bernard touching the imprisonment of the good Knight, whereupon he told me, how having been in great straits from suspicion of being in league with the Yorkists, he was at length arrested and sent unto the Tower, with others of his party, and landed at the Traitors' Bridge. "Once secured there," added the Soldier, "Sir Gilbert had but brief space given him either for sorrow or shriving; since a short hour for confession and prayer, was all that passed between the gaoler's bolt, the priest's rosary, and the sharp axe of the executioner!"

I looked much aghast at these tidings, the truth whereof I did almost question, because they were uttered in a rude and gibing voice, yet too soon did I find that Bernard spake full sooth, and that my former

friend, the stout and generous Sir Gilbert, had indeed perished untimely upon the scaffold. In his fall, I saw, with much fear and sadness, the hazard wherein I myself stood of dying like a traitor were I taken, and I resolved if I might now escape, at once to cross the seas and become a soldier; since to be slain in a brave, though bloody war, where I might sink into a valorous grave, seemed, unto my mind, but little pain in comparison thereof.

But whiles I thus pondered the rude Bernard continued, "Aye, by the spear of St. Michael! stripling, you may well look grave, for that I have told you is as true as the 'Vangils; and you had gone with the rest, had you not fled as you did, for you neither guerdoned my favour nor bought my silence."

"And how might I deem," answered I unto the wily adventurer, "how was I to think that such pay was looked for?"

"Gold makes the truest breast-plate," replied Bernard thereunto, "but that debt you may yet wipe out. Howbeit, as I guessed that all Yorkists would ride the same road, my barb and I set out towards Stoke to meet you. When at Elveston I encountered the Hebrew you wot of, and although, to make better espial, I had clad me in a clerk's doublet, yet, to tell you truly, I had as lief seen the Henker, as the Jew; since I owed him certain monies for drinkings and and other disports, for King Harry gives good employ, though small pay and bare quarters. I was

pondering how best to avoid him or give him some sort of quittance, for my sword is alway heavier than my pouch,—when he at once knew me, accosted me, and proffered to blot out my score, and give me a noble to boot, so I would truly look after thy safety, and seize from thee such letters as might bring thee into hazard; the which I agreed to, and well, I trow, did I keep my pledge."

Hereupon I demanded of the rude Soldier if he now knew aught of Israel, whereunto he answered, by telling me of certain matters which I perceived had chanced in mine absence, and of which I had not yet heard. He told me of the hazard into which the Jew had fallen, from being suspected of holding secret intercourse with the Lord Lovel, whom divers thought was yet living, though his retreat might not be found; and farther, that some week past Israel had been seized by certain spies lurking near the Viscount's dwelling. Mine heart sank within me as he recounted the Hebrew's after-fate, how he had been fearfully menaced, to make him give full and true answer to all which might be demanded; but albeit they vainly sought to terrify him by declaring that horrid machines of torture should rend asunder his limbs whiles that he was yet quick, still did the brave and constant Israel, unbeliever as he might be, forget not his pledge, and failed not in his faith unto the Lord Lovel. His resolution sank not even in the sight of his torments, but he remained ever firm to

the surety he had given, and never revealed the escape or hiding-place of his benefactor. I may here note farther, as my last knowledge concerning him, that at a future time I learned, that from the very hour he became suspected of a league with the Viscount, they who seized upon him left not to persecute him, whilst there was hope of his making any disclosure either by fraud or force; and when it was found that neither might prevail anything, his goods were confiscated, and himself sent out of the realm, under the law that all Jews were banished from England for ever. Thus was he never left at freedom, until his guards had seen him on board the barque which was to bear him beyond sea. What afterwards became of him, or unto what country he went, I never might hear, yet do I trust that he ended his life in peace, although in exile; for this will I say of him for mine own part, and this doth he well deserve of my report, that the blessing of him that was ready to perish was upon him, and that he caused the heart of the fatherless to sing for joy.

When the Lance-man had told me of these sad tidings, he concluded with "And now, I prythee youth, having answered all thy demands, tell me who thou art thyself? Thou canst scarce be the Jew's son, though thou shouldest be a cockerell of some rare line, to draw me a good ten pound out of his purse; for such was the least penny that I owed him."

Hereupon I answered, though with some doubt

and pausing, that it mattered but little unto him as to what race I came of: but that I was the orphan of a brave soldier who fell upon Bosworth-field.

"Art thou so, by St. Martin of Tours!" exclaimed the gibing Bernard, "then doth that, with thy name of Richard, thy fresh ruddy looks and blue eyes, spell at length ———, what I know full well, though I speak it not now. Nay, farther, stripling, it shall be safe for the future, and thou mayest forthwith depart, so thou wilt tell me of one other thing, which is, the secret way into this chamber; for I can well deem that thou knowest it, and perchance somewhat more. And now," continued he with a full stern voice, "mark me, boy; hitherto have I been merry with thee, but as I am once again the royal Harry's follower, set to keep this mansion for him,—I will have this matter from thee strait, or, by the Blessed Melchior of Cologne! I will send thee trussed neck and heels unto the Court, as they carried thy father to his grave, with a pursuivant to declare thy lofty birth unto the King! Chuse, then, briefly, and at once."

I had afore noted the ruffian-like violence of this Soldier, and unto this end had drawn me as nigh unto the window as I might, feeling in my bosom for a sharp little dagger which the Lord Lovel had given unto me when I left him for London;—deeming that I might yet find strength enow to plunge it into the Lance-man should he closely assail me. As, there-

fore, he bade me to determine upon what I would now do, I hastily brake forth into that gallery beyond the oriel-window, which, as I have said, overhung the park, and only saying "This, then, is my choice!" I suddenly leaped therefrom and shot forward, with the speed of a shaft set free from the bow-string.

Although it was my good hap to make mine escape in the heavy mist of a November morning, which covered the way I took, yet might I eftsoons hear the loud shouting and heavy tread of my pursuer and his followers; so that I was full fain hastily to return towards the secret passage and cell of the dead Viscount, wherein I deemed that I had left his body for time and for eternity. I well knew that search would there be vain, could I but once gain an entrance, and then, under the deep shadow of night, I might come forth unseen and hasten my flight unto the sea-coast or London; for my royal sire had long since told me, that fugitives be safer in a crowded city than in solitude. I ran with much haste, yet, from often slipping upon the grass that was wet with the mist and dew, my pursuers gained fast upon me; and being without breath to utter either a cry or a vow unto any of the holy Saints to aid me, I well nigh deemed that all was lost. Nevertheless I still kept forward with unslackened speed, albeit I could see the forms of them that followed me hastily coming on through the fog, and heard full near and loudly their shouts and whistling

as they called upon each other to mark the way in which I was running. At length, however, with spent strength and lost breath, I suddenly plunged me into the mouth of that hidden passage and vanished from the sight of my pursuers, whose hasty footsteps I soon marked approaching; and I might hear them, and specially Bernard, profanely swear by the Mass that they had missed me, they knew not how, for that I took that way and then disappeared like Friar Rush; but they added, moreover, that though the Fiend himself were to aid me, I should not 'scape them so; for that the park should be closely watched day and night, the gate locked and guarded, and the roads around planted with those who should soon stop my travelling thence.

As the sound of their voices died away upon mine ear, I went back unto the cell, in much sadness for the loss of the only friends which I possessed on earth. Israel of Castile being now a banished beggar, Sir Gilbert De Mountford and Master St. Leger cut off upon a bloody scaffold, and the last and noblest relique of King Richard, was already a black and stiffened corse before me. There he sate, so solemn, yet so calm, in the very place of his life, that I could almost have called upon him to aid me with his counsel in that hour of doubt and sorrow; and albeit I was then so young, and might well have feared to have been the companion of a dead corse in that gloomy vault, yet did the thought that mine own life hung by so frail a

tye, keep my heart from all other terrors. I therefore sate sad and silent, until I bethought me of sending up my prayers for mine own deliverance, blended with mine orisons for the timely-departed soul of the Lord Lovel; in doing whereof my tranquillity and strength returned, and I waited full patiently for the hour which should give me back unto freedom.

That night, as I do well remember me, came down heavily, yet did I linger until the welkin was covered with darkness, ere I left the funeral cell for the last time, and quickly and cautiously closed up it's narrow outer entrance in such wise as it might never be suspected by mortal man, by breaking down the earth into it with my sword; well knowing that the other end was past any discovery. Thus, with a sad heart, I bade farewell unto the mouldering dust of the noble Lord Lovel, and betook myself unto a desolate part of the park which overlooked a narrow and lonely country lane. Yet was not mine escape thence effected without much hazard, since I might often hear the heavy tread or low voice of the night-watching guards who were set to intercept me, as they marched about between the shaking trees and over the dark underwoods, humming as they best might, some rude ballad of battle foughten in the days of the olden time. Howbeit, as I now well knew the place which I was traversing, I warily passed them by, and at length got me clear of the boundaries of Minster-Lovel.

After crossing divers wild fields and passing through many dark lanes, towards the break of day I heard the heavy and stately beat of a drum sounding forth the slow old English march; and anon I found me near a little hostel, about which some dozen soldiers, but scantily clothed and armed, were gathered, as if rousing them after the night-halt and making them ready for the day's travel. I sought to pass them by unnoted, but he who seemed to be the Constable, or leader thereof, having already marked me, loudly called unto me with "Holla! comrade, what may you be, and whither away so early?"

I answered unto him with my safest and truest reply, that I was the orphan son of a soldier who was slain at Bosworth, and was then travelling in search of entertainment and employ.

"Then if you lack these," responded the Constable, "by the sword of St. Paul! you're in good luck; for here you may have both, as you seem a stout young stripling and a soldier's son. But, be you what you may, I trow that here's a safe sanctuary for you, whether you are flying from the claw of the sergeant or the Bishop's sompnour; and whether you were bred to the cart or the cloister, only mount helm and spear and you're made gentle at once, being upon the high road to fortune, full soon to become either a Knight or a Noble!"

"And whose quarrel must I draw sword in?" demanded I.

"Why, in no less an one," answered the leader, "than that of Francis the Second, the most noble Duke of Bretagne, against Charles of France. For ye shall wot, my brave comrade, that Edward, Lord Widvile, the Queen's uncle, is leading forth a goodly party of voluntaries unto his aid; the main body whereof hath marched on before towards the Isle of Wight, where we take shipping. And now, my mates, don your arms, and make you all ready for setting forth with what haste you may, whilst I give our new fellow a stout breakfast to make him march the better. By the Bones!" continued the prating Soldier, drawing me with him into the hostel, "Fore God! brother, but you're in excellent luck to have lighted upon us thus: since in another hour we should have been upon our travel, and within five days upon the seas; when you would have lost the good tide which now floweth so fairly onward unto your fortune."

Thereupon I entered the hostel with the Constable, not for that I trusted aught unto his glosing words or mighty promises, or deemed that I should escape the many pains and sorrows of a soldier's life, but because I saw that by following the Lord Widvile over the seas, I should be well removed from mine enemies, and might peradventure get me unto the Duchess Margaret of Burgundy, who was the friend of my House, and so arrive at some better fortune. With these thoughts, I say, I went with the Constable into the hostel; where, after having well fed and strengthened

me, I did engage to serve in that cause as a voluntary in France, for so long as there should be war there, to be found in horse and arms, with four-pence by the day in sterling-money.

The chiefest passages of that war between France and Bretagne, be conserved as great and public matters, which enter not into the story of my life, and so ask but small recital in this place. Whilst I served under the Lord Widvile, I was fain to keep secret not only my lofty birth, but also my favour unto King Richard, because of the hate in which he was held by that Noble, for having put to death his nephew Anthony, and divers others of his House and party, for treason. Howbeit, the Lord Widvile himself was not long my leader, for upon his marching unto the relief of St. Aubin du Cormier, all the power of France advanced against him under Louis de Tremouille, and the two armies might not part without doing battle. This, therefore, did we fight on Monday, the 28th day of July, in the year of Christ 1488, and a most fatal time did it prove; for the Lord Widvile, and the most part of the four hundred English which he had led into Bretagne, were slain, with 6000 Bretons and full 1200 of the French. I 'scaped from the field, sorrowful and wounded; yet lingered I still in Bretagne, as the soldier of the Lady Anne, the young Duchess thereof, until the war between her state and the realm of France was at length cunningly ended, by her becoming the Queen of Charles

VIII. in the year 1491. The King won over her counsellors to consent thereunto, by weighty bribes and goodly promises; and herself by importunity and terror, for that she well saw she must be either his wife or his captive. Whilst speaking of them, I may note in this place, that Charles was a well-formed man, though somewhat short, and of a fair face, yet having large strong features and dark hair: the Duchess Anne was a young maiden of good stature and comely visage, and she was wont to be clad in a vest of azure velvet and white ermine-skin powdered, with a robe of red velvet over all.

This time passed, I did next betake me unto the bold and noble Lady Margaret of York, the third wife of Charles the Hardy, the last French Duke of Burgundy, and sister unto my royal father; with whom I found right good entertainment and favour. She was one who ever sought to magnify and advance her own House, yet did I never declare my kindred unto her; albeit she made me one of the chief of that guard which alway attended upon her person, being all men of gentle birth,—and though she was wont often to employ me in private services, familiarly calling me Cousin, and saying that I had somewhat of the look of a Plantagenet, and specially the very trick of her brother Richard's visage. But natheless I disclosed not unto her the truth, for that I marked her to be beguiled with one Perkin Warbeck, the offspring of a Merchant, whom she cunningly tutored to person-

ate Richard, Duke of York, the second son of her brother King Edward IV.; and so sent him unto England, where he was well received and his tale believed of many, and for a long space he kept the realm in tumult. This was, as I now think, about November, in the year of Grace 1492, but I leave it unto story to recount his adventures; only noting that he uttered divers foul and false leasings against my father, affirming him to have murdered the young King Edward V. in the Tower, some seven years before, when himself most wondrously escaped the like fate, albeit he could neither declare how, nor even in what nation, he had passed that time. Yet being, as he was, of good presence and features, and fair-spoken withal, he satisfied the demands of many who rose up in arms and followed his fortunes; and these were not of the common sort only, but divers noble and worshipful men believed and affirmed his pretences to be true. But though some of his aiders thought thus, others befriended him only from discontent at Harry Tudor, who, as they deemed, had not largely enough rewarded them; and others again from a base desire to prosper by tumult and by spoil. Howbeit, all this time my truer and fairer claim to be a King,—as I then thought it—was left unminded of any; and I felt much misliking and jealousy, that a low-born adventurer was thus again preferred unto the real son of a Sovereign: though, perchance, that very neglect saved me from the defeat and disgrace of Warbeck, his flight,

imprisonment, and other sorrows, the which were ended only by the axe and the scaffold.

It chanced that, about this season, I became acquainted with certain of the cunning artists, who had aided in rearing those stately buildings in the realm of Burgundy, which have been imitated in divers fine and curious palaces erected in England.* Truly, I think that the world cannot shew more gorgeous or princely fabrics, than those set up under the rule of Philip the Good, Duke of Burgundy, and specially his own palace at Dijon; wherein the dark, and rude, and lowering walls of the embattled castle, or lofty watch-

* The highly ornamented style of Domestic Architecture which is considered as characteristic of the Tudor period, was certainly derived from the very rich edifices erected under the patronage of the Duke of Burgundy above-mentioned, between the years 1419 and 1467; fine examples of which are to be found in the Maison de la Pucelle and the Hall of Justice at Rouen, and similar edifices at Bruxelles, Ghent, and Bruges. Mansions of this character,—wherein the features of the old gloomy castle were enriched and blended with a more stately and convenient style of building,—were erected in England in the reign of Henry VI; but perhaps a more splendid instance was given in the royal palace of Sheen built by Henry VII., after a fire there in 1500, to which he gave his own title of Richmond. It is related by Speed that the "curious and exquisite building" both of this place and of his Chapel at Westminster, were first learned by himself and Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester, in France, and thence brought into England.

tower, fitted only for scenes of strife or blood, were lost in the richly-wrought turret, the gay window and gallery full rarely carved, and the broad and stately gateway; forming most glorious pleasances for the court, the triumph, the tourney, and the masque. After this manner, then, did I learn much of the art of building goodly mansions, the which in my later years hath been of great benefit unto me; and hath even provided me with a home and a retreat, when all other shelters have failed me in mine old age.

Having long outlived Duke Charles of Burgundy, the noble Lady Margaret at length departed this life and went unto God, at her Seignory of Malines in Brabant, in the year 1503. But ere she died, she caused me to be called unto her chamber; and saying that I had been unto her a true and faithful soldier, and forasmuch as that I was of her own country, and, as she verily thought, her kinsman,—holding me, peradventure, to be some natural son of *King* Richard,—she would entrust unto me certain rich jewels, for the fulfilment of her last desires in England; the which she prayed me rightly to perform as I would prosper me in this world and the next. Hereupon I promised her true service, and she commanded me to take her coronet of gold and gems unto the Chapel of the Virgin, St. George, and St. Edward, at Windsor, wherein lay the body of her royal brother, King Edward IV., and give it unto the Brethren there, in guerdon for divers masses to be said for the health of both their souls.

Unto the Lady Elizabeth, his Queen, at Bermondsey Abbey, she bequeathed her red velvet robe 'broidered with golden broom-flowers, being the Plantagenet badge; together with a tablet of chased gold wrought with the Visitation of the Virgin unto St. Elizabeth; and to her dear kinswoman, the Lady Bride, the Queen's daughter, she gave a golden bridal collar for her neck, with precious stones hanging thereat, and a pair of pater-nosters of coral and silver. The noble Duchess did also farther devise unto the high-altar of the Grey-Friars' Church at Leicester, where the corse of King Richard had been so rudely sepultured, a chain of gold enamelled in ancient wise, having the name of God upon every link; for daily prayers for the health of her own soul and that of her royal brother. In brief, she bestowed divers other rich and costly gifts, for masses to be sung for herself and those of her House who were deceased, in every place where they were sepultured; and unto myself she gave fifty marks of gold,—£33. 6*s.* 8*d.*—for seeing that her will herein was duly fulfilled. She did then give unto me her discharge from all other earthly service that I owed unto her, and I left her with divers assurances of fidelity; not without much sadness and heaviness of heart, but I had now seen so many who had befriended me gradually pass away from me into the devouring grave, that by this time I was well nigh steeled against any new touch of such calamity.

Thus died the gallant Duchess of Burgundy, much

to the joy of Harry Tudor; unto whom the flattering followers of Lancaster were wont to say she was as Juno of old was unto the wandering Prince Æneas, moving heaven and earth against him,* as Virgilius hath full sweetly written—"*Arma virumque cano,*" which every scholar knoweth; or in our ruder English

> "Arms be my song, and him whom Heaven's decree
> Drave from the Troian coasts to Italie;
> Who, ere he reach'd the fair Lavinian strand,
> Long space was toss'd o'er ocean and on land
> By the great Powers who rule supreme above,
> And chief by Juno, angry Queen of Jove;
> Whose rage relentless him pursued afar
> With vengeful storms, with foemen, and with war!"

Howbeit, though Henry of Lancaster was thus likened unto Æneas, yet might I never note the semblance betwixt them; for that the Troian Prince was both pious and noble, whereas he of the Red Rose was only a simular of virtue, exceeding artful, and all devoted unto covetise and oppressive gathering of riches.

I have but little more to add of my long sojourn and exile in France,—when I have noted that I saw the body of the Lady Margaret sepultured in the Church of the Cordeliers in Malines, and returned

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* This circumstance is also related by Bernard Andreas, the contemporary Historian of Henry VII.

into Burgundy, to receive those goods which she had devoted unto holy works in England; after which I journied hither to perform her will. At length, about the beginning of April, in 1503, I left Burgundy, and travelled with what haste I might unto Harfleur, whence I forthwith set sail and landed me at the Isle of Wight; it being now fifteen years since I had last left it for Bretagne, with the army of the hapless Lord Widvile.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SOLDIER'S RETURN, AND FIRST ADVENTURE IN ENGLAND.

—As he entered the Church—he beheld her alone in the midst of the aisle prostrate upon Euphrasia's Tomb. The piety, the gratitude of Olympia, the sanctity of the place—and the recollection of past times, to which these circumstances gave birth, made a powerful impression upon the heart of Theophilus. He advanced towards Olympia; the sound of his feet drew her attention, and she turned her face bathed in tears to see who it was. Theophilus approached and knelt beside her—and she beheld him with astonishment.

MAD. DE GENLIS' VEILLÉES DU CHATEAU.

THUS did I once more spring upon the shores of my native country with a warm and joyful heart; for albeit in mine exile I had seen the red vinèyards of Burgundy, and felt the warm suns of Languedoc, and heard the gentle speech of Paris and the Court of King Charles,—yet did I ever think that in mine own land the yellow cornfields looked more plenteous, the colder skies more healthful, and my countrymen more artless and virtuous, though of blunter manners and ruder speech. It was now a season of peace and prosperity—excepting the exactions of Harry Tudor, —throughout the realm; which seemed, as it were rest-

ing and reviving from the wars and tumults wherewith it had long been disquieted, even by the very children of the soil and the foes of it's own household which are ever the worst: and I bethought me, as I looked upon this tranquillity, of those rude old verses of the ancient Chronicler written now some two hundred years past, wherein he saith,—

"England is a well good land! I ween of each land best!
Set in the ending of the world, all in the healthful West;
The blue sea goeth him about, he standeth like an isle,
And little may his foemen dare unless it be with guile!"*

And now with all speed I hastened me unto the Chapel at Windsor, where King Edward lay; to perform the will of the Lady Margaret there, that place being first and chiefest in my road. I reached thereunto about the hour of *Nones*, on the third of the Calends of May, being Saturday, the twenty-ninth day of April, and the birth-day of the noble King

* The above verses, very slightly modernised, are taken from the commencement of Robert of Gloucester's metrical Chronicle of England; the author of which is supposed to have been a Monk of Gloucester Abbey, sent to reside at Oxford with the youth there belonging to that church. His real name is not known, but he is believed to have flourished and died about A.D. 1280, the beginning of the reign of Edward I.; and consequently to have been one of the earliest poets of England.

Edward IV., who was a great benefactor unto the Castle and Chapel of Windsor; and for the health of whose soul I devoutly joined the good Canons in those prayers, which our Church hath appointed to be said on the Anniversary of a Patron deceased.—The Brethren received me with wondrous goodwill, and constrained me to lodge that night in their College; though, perchance, part of their courtesy might spring from the costly gift which I brought them, and from my gallant habit as the Duchess of Burgundy's soldier; being a bright suit of plate-armour, a blue velvet jazerine surcoat, and a sword and dagger in red scabbards. When that our devotions were ended, the Sacristan led me to behold that most marvellous and princely Chapel; shewing me the stalls and banners of the famous Knights of the Garter, the high-altar covered with a rich black cloth-of-gold, given thereunto by the victorious Founder King Edward III., and the fair tombs of such as had been buried in that place.

Of all these sepulchres I well wot that the one reared over the corse of the royal Edward of York, was the most noble and stately. It standeth in an arch close on the North side of the high-altar, and is wrought in wondrous wise of pierced church-work, being all of polished steel gilded, and made after the semblance of folding gates between four towers. The body lieth within, beneath a pavement of touch-stone; and above it, is the King's jupon of his coat-

armour, covered with blue and crimson velvet, with the ensigns of France and England 'broidered thereon in pearl and gold, interwoven with divers rubies; the which trophy of honour hath, ever since his funeral, been hung over his grave.

The sacred calm and silence, and the holy grandeur of that spot, seemed to bring back unto my mind those days when my young feet were wont to wander in the Cathedral at Ely, or around my father's tomb in the Church of the Grey-Friars at Leicester; and towards the close of day I again went alone into the chancel, telling the good Custos, or Decanus as he is now called, Christopher Urswicke, that I would fain pray awhile in secret on that evening, since early on the morrow I must hasten forward on my journey. It was then, enwrapped in thought, that I drew nigh unto the royal tomb by the high-altar, and, kneeling there, prayed audibly unto God and the Virgin for the salvation of all my House; and specially for King Edward, the Duchess Margaret, my noble cousin the Lady Bride Plantagenet, and King Richard, whom I called my father. As these orisons escaped from my lips, I heard a gentle voice near me exclaim "Holy St. Edward!—my cousin, and the son of King Richard!" whereupon I started, and, looking around, beheld that a leaf of one of the gilded gates of King Edward's tomb was open, and that within was a Maiden seeming also to be in prayer. She was clothed in a white habit, such as was worn by Novices of the

Order of St. Austin, and the fading light was yet enough to shew me that it was indeed no other than the Lady Bride at her father's sepulchre; now most wondrously increased both in beauty and in stature since I had last beheld her.

Hereupon I hastily arose in much confusion, but as she was about to depart, I noted that in her surprise her rosary had fallen from her hand, and I forthwith entered the tomb and restored it unto her; saying, albeit with a hesitating voice, "Believe not, Lady, that I knew of your presence in this place, or came hither to trespass on your secret prayers and duteous piety. Indeed you may well deem that what I have now uttered is not to be spoken lightly, seeing that mine own safety is so much involved therein: nevertheless, I rest me securely upon the good faith of the Lady Bride Plantagenet."

"Stranger," responded she, hastily drawing her robe around her, as if anxious to avoid a more perfect recognition on my part, and yet speaking in a voice so sweet and gentle that it came upon mine hearing like the soft swellings of distant music;— "Stranger, you have in sooth awakened my wonder: yet whoever you may be, whether another false adventurer from Burgundy, or the true son of the blood-stained Richard, your words with me are as if they had never been spoken; since I have neither desire to expose thee unto danger, nor aught to do with the world or it's vain-glorious honours."

As she spake thus, her visage became suddenly crimsoned over, yet was it but for a moment, as anon her pure and eloquent blood flowed onward in it's wonted course, and her face resumed again it's tranquil fairness; such as the still lake shews unto heaven, when the passing gale hath gone by, and the light ruffle which it called forth hath died upon the clear waters. When I last saw the Lady Bride, there was much of the glad look of childhood in her bright blue eyes, and the rich abundance of her hair of paly gold; and those golden locks did still remain even more beauteous than before, but methought that her merry glance was now shaded by a musing melancholy, which shall be full rarely noted in the countenance of one so young. Having awhile marked her in silence, listening with wondrous delight unto her voice, I now assayed to answer her; telling her, that albeit I was indeed from Burgundy, and even from her noble kinswoman the late Duchess, yet was I no false adventurer who sought to disquiet the realm, nor was my noble father aught of that which the world was wont to call him. I then told her of the Lady Margaret's decease, of her mission which had brought me unto England, and specially of that touching the good Queen Elizabeth and herself; wherein, I added, I could not but rejoice, since it would lead me again to hear the voice of one who was so passing fair.

"I pray you, good stranger," replied the noble

Damsel, "I pray you to cease this flattery; for, sooth to say, I am alway but little minded to listen unto such speech, but at no time less than this; seeing the sacredness of the place wherein we stand, and the sorrow which must be in the heart of an orphan, who walketh over all that is mortal of both her parents."

"Blessed Virgin!" exclaimed I in wonder, "of both, Lady! said'st thou of both?"

"Aye, stranger," answered she, "that did I in sooth, for the good Queen Elizabeth is stretched beside her Lord in this sepulchre, dying at the Abbey of Bermondsey: unto whose souls may God be gracious!"

"Then, Lady," responded I, "unto you belong all the gifts of the noble Duchess, which should have been possessed by your royal mother, the 'broidered velvet robe and the golden tablet of St. Elizabeth; together with the bequests which she sendeth unto yourself, a bridal collar of gold and gems, and a rosary of coral and silver."

"I trust, that the good Duchess is in Paradise!" said the Lady Bride, looking upwards as methought with a heavenly glance, "but her gifts, saving the tablet and the rosary, are not for me; since pass but a brief time and I shall be vested in a robe that allows of no other, and her bridal collar may be never worn by one who will eftsoons be consecrated to the ter as the spouse of Christ!"

"How! Lady," again did I exclaim, "so soon! and do you in very truth retire from the world, even

whiles you must be the delight of every heart and eye which knoweth or beholds you?"

"Even so," replied the Princess, "and for this cause am I come hither, to say my last orisons, and to look, perchance, for the last time upon the sepulchre of my father and mother; and, then, bidding farewell unto the world for ever, to retreat into the Convent whereunto I have been long vowed and professed, for on St. Martin's Eve* shall I receive the veil, and begin my spiritual life even from mine earthly birth-day. You may well see, then, courteous stranger, that the costly gifts you bear are not for me; yet if you will bestow them, here and at Bermondsey, for the health of the departed souls of my House, I will hold myself much your debtor, and will cease not to bear you long within my memory."

"Enough, most blessed Lady Bride," answered I, "by the Cross of St. George, it shall be done! for to live a moment in your memory, is dearer unto me than to have shield and banner hung over the proudest of yonder stalls. But for thee, Lady, thou

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* The Princess Bride was born at Eltham Palace on the Eve of St. Martin, Friday, November 10th, 1480; and was baptised in the Chapel there the day following by Edward Story, Bishop of Chichester. She was professed to Dartford Priory early in life, but was probably not consecrated before the age of twenty-five, in the year 1505, when her birth-day again fell upon a Friday.

hast been full many years hidden within the dearest remembrance of Richard Plantagenet, for even before he saw thee, thou wert most wondrously impictured there; but after bearing thee from the falling scaffold at thy sister's coronation—"

"Ha! what sayest thou!" exclaimed the Lady Bride thereunto, "was it then thee, to whom I am indebted for life? Full often, indeed, hath the tale been told me that I was saved, perchance from death, by a brave youth of goodly form and courteous manners, even whilst the scaffold fell beneath us, but who afterwards was no-where to be found; and oft-times have I desired to behold my deliverer. But surely one so brave and gentle as thou art, can never be the son of so foul and blood-stained a tyrant and traitor as Richard!"

As she thus spake, I felt my cheek glow and mine heart beat high in defence of mine injured father, whilst the mild speech and deportment of the Lady Bride became lofty and impassioned; and though I would fain have declared unto her that much wrong was herein done unto his memory, ere I might so reply she continued thus in a voice of indignant sorrow. "Oh! I may never cease to forget how the unnatural Gloucester, albeit he was himself of the House of York, made his way unto the crown even through the blood of his own kindred! Tell not *me*, although thou mayest be indeed his son,—tell not *me* that he was maligned, whose dear and guileless bro-

thers were given to an untimely death, by him who was called their Protector, as in sooth he should have been. Oh, Edward! Oh, Richard! beloved companions of my childhood! when shall I cease to remember your most cruel fate, or to execrate the very name of him who so foully wrought your ruin?"

"Lady," interposed I at this place, much disconcerted between her hatred of my father and mine own admiration of herself, "Lady, I beseech you to credit not the slander; I have heard him solemnly disavow the destruction of your noble brothers, and Richard was all too brave a King to dip his hands in innocent blood: none did ever yet deny his valour, and remember you that he who dares to fight, dares not to murder. Believe it, the Princes fell by the act of God, or how might my father have gone forth so undauntedly unto his last battle as I indeed beheld him, with so deep a sin unanswered upon his soul? He was in truth no such monster in his mind, nor yet deformed in body as some do now unblushingly aver;*

* This passage appears to refer to the contemporary description of Richard contained in the Latin History of the Kings of England by John Rosse or Rous, commonly called the Antiquary of Warwick, who died in 1491, and from whom Sir Thomas More gave the account already mentioned. The substance of Rosse's information is, that Richard was weak and little of body, low of stature, having a short face, and unequal shoulders. Sir Thomas More, Hall the Historian, and others, have increased these circumstances into positive deformity.

the which, perchance, you may formerly have beheld. For mine own part, albeit I saw him but in his tent the night before his death, and in the last agonies thereof, yet may his goodly form and speech, and his tender and noble bearing, even in those solemn moments, never pass from my memory whilst life shall be left unto me; and, Lady, I should deem myself to be all unworthy of your kindred, were I not willing to defend by sword and speech the name and fame of the brave King Richard."

Hereupon I briefly told the Lady Bride such passages as I knew of mine own story; as mine instruction and breeding in Ely Monastery, mine interview with my father, and his disclosure of my honourable birth, and intended acknowledgement thereof, with his private marriage unto my mother, had he not been prevented by death. I did also note unto her that his fall had been most sad, and his remains treated with cruel despite; and finally besought her to bury her hatred unto him in his tomb, and believe that his offspring was of true heart, and all devoted unto her service.

"In sooth, stranger," answered she, with a milder and calmer air, "in sooth I can almost well believe that thou art the Duke of Gloucester's son, for, albeit I saw him only in mine infancy, and so may remember but little of him myself, yet hath it been told me that he was passing well-spoken, and could glose over foul actions with wondrous fair terms; and thou, too,

dost almost make the worse appear the better. His death, as thou sayest, was indeed full sad; yet was it much too good and noble for him, if he were truly the cold, crafty, midnight, assassin, which men speak him;—but all is known unto God, and to him is he now gone to make answer!—For thyself I know nought but what seems fair, and becoming an honest and right good gentleman: yet honourable as thy birth may be, I would never see thee upon the throne supported by the House of York; and I bethink me that it was once reported that Sir Gilbert De Mountford was to bring forth a son of Richard against King Henry."

Unto this I replied that I held no such ambitious or evil thoughts, whatever the proud and giddy blood of youth might once have quickened within me; that Sir Gilbert had long since gone unto his account; and that she might now triumph over the fallen Richard, since her sister was upon his throne, whilst himself and his friends were either outlawed, executed, or slain in battle, the last of them being an obscure soldier, whose life was even then in her power.

The face of the noble Damsel, which of late had changed full suddenly from calm and gentle piety unto wrath and sorrow, now resumed again it's wonted look, the which I had so long and deeply regarded with delight. "I take unto me shame," said she at length, "that anger should thus have transported me, but the thought of the wrongs and hapless fate of the

dear departed companions of mine infancy, do indeed make me sometimes forget, that the Faith of Christ teaches us to forgive even our enemies and destroyers. Yet do I trust that the day is fast drawing nigh, when, retired in the calm and holy shades of a convent, consoled and instructed by the good Sisters who have there devoted their lives unto God,—mine earthly thoughts and angry passions may sink to rest for ever.—God be gracious unto the soul of my kinsman Gloucester!—and for thee, kind stranger, albeit I would that thou hadst told me of another father, yet, for thy service towards me, will I think nought but good of thee, and I rejoice that I have cause to remember thee without sin. Farewell! a virgin vowed unto Heaven hath nought but thanks and prayers to bestow, and they are thine already."

The Lady Bride then gave me her hand, which I put unto my lips with much devotion: whereupon, hastily drawing it from me, she wrapped herself more closely in her mantle, and bending her head towards me with much dignity, went forth from the Chapel by a private portal; when it seemed as if the even-tide had suddenly sunken down upon me in all it's darkness.

CHAPTER XVII.

A SECOND INTERVIEW — AN AVOWAL — AND A SEPARATION.

She came!—She is gone!—We have met!
And meet—perhaps never again!
The sun of that moment is set,—
And seems to have risen in vain.

COWPER.

I HAVE afore recounted, that the good Brethren of Windsor prayed me to tarry the coming night with them, in those fair stone dwellings which the noble King Edward III. caused to be edified for the Decanus and Canons of the House, in the Lower-Ward of the Castle, and on the Eastern side of the cloister adjoining unto the Chapel of St. George. Beneath the same roof, also, as I did afterwards find, the Lady Bride was lodged in certain chambers between the Gunner's and Winchester Towers; the windows whereof looked unto the Inner-Bailey and Keep, and overhung divers low wooden houses allotted unto the servitors. The good Decanus and his Canons would fain have passed that joyful season,—being as I said

the birth-day of King Edward IV.,—in wassail and revelry, and in discoursing of that which I had seen in France and Burgundy; and I might well hear the merry songs and voices of the lacquies below, which shewed that they were doing the like. But beside being now wearied with travel, the thought of that even's converse with the Lady Bride, had shaded over my mind with a grave and holy calmness that made me care little for any such pastime; and seeing, therefore, that mine heart was filled with the cherished remembrance of a scene so sad and sacred, I was all unfit for any other enjoyment. For this cause, therefore, did I soon entreat to go unto my rest, as I did think to travel early upon the coming day.

The chamber wherein I was to lodge was of little space, having a vaulted roof, and a tall narrow window that dimly showed the Chapel-cloister lying in misty moonlight beneath; yet did I take but small note of it's incommodity, or the night without, seeing that it contained a pallet whereon I might well rest me, and ponder over the sweet and bitter thoughts of my heart. Upon this couch I therefore threw me, taking off but little of mine attire save mine armour, and lay revolving, as I was wont to do, the scenes of my life that had already passed, and the untried paths through which I had yet to travel. As mine eyes began to grow heavy and to close, and the real images before them were fading into those quaint and dim forms, which they do oft put on as we sink into slum-

ber, my rest was suddenly broken by a loud and continued noise, which seemed to betoken much of present danger; nevertheless, when I looked through the window I could behold nought of hazard in the dark cloister, saving that divers persons were hastily passing about it with torches and loud cries. Howbeit, I might full soon hear the shout of "Fire!" and the heavy and hasty toll of the alarum from the Bell-Tower beyond the Chapel on the West; and anon a ruddy glow rising upon the night-clouds over the building wherein I was lodging, made me deem that the flames had broken out in it's chambers.

I will not now seek to pourtray the wild disorder of that place, which was in truth greater than I can picture it, or how the inmates of those lodgings came hastily from their chambers, all endeavouring to find safety in escape. For mine own part I made me ready with all speed, and went into the gallery or passage, with the purpose of retreating as the others had done already; yet full desirous of seeking and saving the Lady Bride in that hour of hazard. It was dark without, but as I passed by an open chamber on the other side, I beheld through the window thereof the fire rising up fiercely from beneath as if it would eftsoons assail that room. The red light was cast upon a female in a white habit, devoutly kneeling before a crucifix, yet sometimes looking silently around her, although with much anxiety and doubt, as to whither she should turn for succour. I felt me well assured

that only the Lady Bride would be thus pious and tranquil in a time of such danger; yet without regarding who she might be in that perilous place, I went towards her, and accosting her with little form of speech, raised her in mine arms and hastily bore her forth.

The fearful light which was cast through her window, shewed me that it was indeed the Lady Bride whom I now carried, but soon the blaze sank down as if it had been somewhat abated; when she suddenly started from me and hastily withdrew into her chamber. I followed again thither, being anxious to convey her from that place of hazard, and entreated of her to secure her safety by instant flight with me unto some distant part of the building; unto which she did at length consent, and, in the disorder which did then prevail, I led her, unmarked by any, to the stone chambers of the Canons on the Western side of the cloister.

This was scarcely performed when I heard divers voices, both of men and females, loudly calling to each other to hasten and re-assure the Lady Bride; for that the danger was now past, and, peradventure, had been less great than it was at first deemed. Yet not being wholly satisfied hereof, I hastened the noble Maiden as swiftly as her fainting steps would move onward, until we had gotten some good space from that spot of supposed peril, encouraging her on the way thither as I best might. When at length I saw

her in safety, I said unto her, "Lady, be of good cheer, all hazard is now past, and I rejoice in having been so nigh unto you as to have borne you therefrom. Yet may I ask if you indeed know me; or are conscious that he who now stands at your side is no other than he who hath so long and deeply adored you?"

"Right well, good Richard, did I know you," answered she, "even when you first appeared in the gallery, and all else were seeking their own safety; but that courage which delayed you to succour another, forgetful of any evil that might fall upon yourself, assured me that my preserver could be none but he, who formerly so bravely adventured for me and my beloved mother."

"Oh Lady!" answered I thereupon, "much honoured and truly glad do I feel me in this hour, to hear myself, all unworthy as indeed I am, thus lauded by one of your surpassing excellence. This is, in truth, no time for large discourse, nor would I boldly trespass on your courtesy; yet, long as I have reverenced you and ever as I must adore you, let me say that by thus often bringing us together, may we not mark the hand of God denoting that the course of our life should be the same, and that we were indeed destined for each other?"

"I know not," unto this responded the noble Damsel, "that we ought therefore to deem, that what hath been *permitted* by Heaven hath also been *de-*

creed by it: but of this no more, since such speech is in no wise befitting one to hear who is already a daughter of the Church, and will soon be consecrated as a pure virgin unto God."

"Yet, dearest Lady," answered I, "forbid me not to feast upon the hope that we are indeed destined for each other's love, being of one House and of equal blood; for those whom God hath so fashioned, although born in climes far distant and parted by strange diversities of condition, yet meet at an appointed place and hour when their affections may best be blended, and are thenceforth 'bound up in the bundle of life' together. And of such, Lady,—deem me not too bold herein, for albeit I am in truth of royal line, I yet venture not to think that I can ever be your equal,—of such would I fain believe are we. Of the same House, and pursued by like storms which have left us orphans in a convulsed world, those very tempests, which did seem only to part us for aye, have yet in truth brought us together without any devices of our own. Say, then, dearest Lady Bride, Oh! say, if we may not well deem, without folly or weakness, that what hath been so marvellously wrought for us is indeed the purpose of Heaven, the which we ought reverently to receive and to adore."

"Cease to speak thus, stranger," responded the Lady Bride, "nor pour into the ear of one devoted unto the Lord these words of earthly passion. In

sooth I scarcely know what you would utter; yet do I own that all too readily and sinfully have I listened unto your words. I am now, as it were, casting my last look abroad upon the world, and then hastening unto that pious retreat wherein I shall behold it no more."

"But thither," answered I, "you will not now retire, since your Noviciate hath not yet passed away: for as we have again met and have been twice thus wondrously brought into communion, Oh! beauteous Lady Bride, fly with me, I beseech you, and let us not part again."

"Entreat me no more," replied the Princess, "for to act as your passion would have me, would be but to fly from the embraces of Heaven itself! And where, I pray you, should we find safe retreat or means of life? Oh! Plantagenet, if such be in truth your name, tempt me no longer unto that which hath no issue but in ruin."

"Lady," responded I thereunto, most wondrously impassioned and emboldened, "I give you my faith and troth that I court you not to fly *from* Heaven but *to* it; since Heaven is love, and mine I offer you from the inmost chamber of a brave and honest heart. And for an asylum, well I wot to find a sure and fair one with King Charles of France, since he would fain have kept me in his service when the Duchess of Burgundy deceased. Think no more, then, upon the cloister but the altar; and look not to become a sister but a bride."

"Forbear, thou kind profane one," returned the Lady, "I dare not hear thee farther, lest the very echoes of thy words should hereafter remain upon my heart, to break in upon the holy silence of religion. Cease, then, good friend, to press thy suit upon me, and hold *thy* peace, if indeed thou dost value *mine*."

"Think not so harshly of me," was my answer, "that in any case I would wound thy quiet, or lead thy virtuous heart unto aught but happiness; albeit all the better feelings which Heaven hath implanted in man, do bid me urge my prayer to thee. Yet if thou *wilt* withdraw thee from the world, which will henceforth be unto me like a sunless sky,—tell me, I pray thee, in what Convent thy young beauties shall be enshrined, that I may bear it's name engraven upon my heart, and often make devout pilgrimage unto it's blessed walls."

"No, Richard," responded that fair one, "such may never be; since I retire me from the world, to be free from all it's cares and tumultuous passions, and not to drag after me the lusts which I have forsworn for ever. The holy joy and tranquillity which I promise me in that sacred resting-place, is to be won only by giving up the things of Time for the bliss of Eternity; even as the storm-tossed mariner hopes to win safety on the troubled ocean, when he gladly casts from his barque all her rich lading and brave tackle, so that he may ride over the waves unto his desired haven."

The pious earnestness with which she spake, caused me to feel how well she was fitted to become a sainted inmate of a convent; and yet, although it may in truth seem strange, the more I saw that she would adorn such a holy life, the more did I desire to win her therefrom: upon which I again said, "Nevertheless, Lady, might it not be well to remember that He who willed you to be born into this world, gave you unto it as a shining light to call forth His glory? so that to withdraw from it might in truth be but to oppose His will."

"Thy speech, stranger," said the Lady Bride in a more reserved tone, "is not to honour God, but to flatter his unworthy servant. Think you that Heaven cannot shew forth it's own glory, even from the loneliest retreat of it's votaries? or deem you that, because we must sojourn for awhile here, we should forget that we are but travelling unto immortality? I ween there is but small reason in this; and as well might he who is clad in the infidel's turban and caftan, when for some short season he journies in Palestine, think to wear them for the rest of his days; or as wisely might the merchant, when he hath returned unto his native land, think evermore to speak a foreign tongue. No, Richard! He who hath willed me to live on this earth designed it not for mine home, but as the barque bearing me onward to Eternity; and it is for that haven that I would even now prepare me."

Never, I trow, did religious votary gaze with more

devout admiration upon the shrine of a sainted martyr, than I now did upon the Lady Bride; who thus, even in the very noon-tide of her youth and beauty, was raised far above the thoughts of earth, and in body and spirit devoted unto God. As I thus beheld her with wonder, I took her hand and fervently exclaimed "Piety like thine, Lady, might in truth convert an infidel, and almost turn a Christian to an Idolator!" —In doing this I well believe that such reverent admiration was expressed by mine eyes, that the lovely Bride was assured by them as well as by my tongue, that the boldness which I now used sprang not from idle wantonness nor violence. Although methought she somewhat trembled as I held her, yet did she seem to have nought of alarm, and even withdrew not from my touch. Upon this, notwithstanding mine adoration of her piety, I almost unconciously raised unto my lips the soft hand of beauty which I pressed, and kissed it; yet, though the Lady Bride started thereat, it seemed unto me rather from surprise than anger, so that I was encouraged to repeat it, at the same moment sinking upon one knee, when most suddenly the Custos of St. George's Chapel entered the apartment, followed by divers Canons and servitors, and one or two Sisters of the Order of St. Austin.

In truth I can but ill depict, how the good Christopher Urswicke and his followers started at thus seeing me, as it might seem, wooing the daughter of a King, and a virgin devoted unto the cloister. The red

flush of anger rose upon their cheeks, and a dark light seemed to come forth of their eyes, whilst from every tongue the words of wrath came full rapidly and fiercely. "Saints of Heaven!" cried the Custos, "and is it thus the very house and daughter of God are profaned by a foreign stranger! is it thus that a maiden of royal blood,—as the holy 'Vangil saith, '*de domo et familia David,*' one of the very house and line of David,—can forget her high estate and sacred espousals, to listen, in an hour of danger and even in her father's palace, to the rude homage of a nameless soldier!—Lady," continued he, solemnly shaking his head, "this is not well,—this is not well."

"It is indeed not well, most reverend Decanus," answered I, starting upon my feet, "to deem that the Lady Bride *would* hear, or that I should speak, aught to which angels and men might not alike listen. You call me a nameless soldier, and unto you I may indeed be such; but were my lineage made known, there would not be found a loftier in the broad realm of England! And yet do I esteem it no small honour to have rescued the Lady Bride, when her holy sisters had fled from her, and her servitors were more likely to have fired her lodging in their brawling cups, than to have saved her from the flames: had *their* aid been at hand, *mine* had been uncalled for."

It was in truth somewhat strange that, speaking at a venture as I now did, I should so exactly guess the cause of that night's brief and sudden alarm; the which

did at length prove to have arisen from the carousing lacquies, who had set fire unto those low wooden buildings beneath the Lady Bride's window in the lodgings of the Decanus. As I spake, methought I saw some of the servitors, who seemed hastily to have taken up their weapons, start forward; and in especial one tall stout fellow, in rusty armour, whose face was shaded by his headpiece: howbeit, the spirit of mine ancestors was quick within my veins, and I recked not the number or 'vantage of my foes, but bore me against them with lofty speech and unyielding look. Nevertheless, the boisterous clamour was again renewed; and though it might be that little harm was intended me, yet all menaced; when the Lady Bride, in a resolute though gentle voice, commanded that none should harm me; since I had saved her life with much hazard unto myself, and, for more security, had conducted her unto the cloisters.

"Small danger, I trow, was there, Lady Bride," thereupon answered one of the Austin Nuns, "since all the fearful blaze, as the stranger hath well said, came but from some drunken servitors who had fired their lodging, which thou knowest might never have burned the stone chambers above."

"Then small, I trow, Sister Maude," returned the Lady Bride with a gentle quickness of answer, "small, I trow, was the courage wanted to withstand it; albeit certain of my companions *did* fly even from that light danger." But, whilst she spake, her deport-

ment, which was commonly mild as the soft gale of even-tide, became so full of dignity and boldness, that they who stood by were at once subdued into silence, as she commanded that I should go forth in the morning without farther question, seeing that I was bearing unto London certain jewels belonging to the late Queen her mother. And this her so generous effort on my behalf, did well shew unto me that courage, not less than virtue, doth evermore spring in a truly royal bosom, being divinely implanted and brought forth therein by God.

Upon this, however, they no longer flouted me, but gave their best care to the Lady Bride in conveying her unto another lodging; and thus was that fair one and myself again most rudely parted. Yet, as she went forth, she once more looked round unto me, and, as our eyes met, I saw holy resignation in her visage, which admonished me of our duty, though blended, as methought, with somewhat of regret for our separating thus; and she also waved her hand unto me with gratitude and dignity. The ancient Custos then told me, that as I had not scrupled to address a betrothed daughter of the Church with unholy words even within the College walls, I might no longer look for harbour or entertainment there, but that I must begone when the Castle should first be opened in the morning; unto which he secretly added, "I well believe the Princess is most virtuous, and yourself an honest soldier; though, for your own sake, as a bene-

factor unto our Chapel, I wish you a safe and speedy departure. 'Keep out of the main road if you may, and go any whither rather than to London for a brief space; and so I commit you unto the keeping of God."

I followed this counsel as closely as I might, travelling a most wearisome journey through wild and cross roads unto Leicester, where I made the Lady Margaret's offering at the Church of the Grey-Friars, and added thereunto mine own poor dole for the health of the soul of King Richard; both of the which pious gifts have since been seized upon as spoil by the turbulent son of Harry Tudor, and even my father's sepulchre laid in ruins by his riotous followers. Albeit my road thither was full of hazard, far longer and more wearisome than it would have been to have gone unto London, and thence to Leicester, yet did I beguile it by divers thoughts of the Lady Bride and my converse with her; wherein mine heart did exult, in despite of all the contumely which I had endured. He only, who hath witnessed the sweet smile, and heard the melting voice of peerless beauty, when benignly listening unto a suppliant's suit, he only, I say, *can* image unto himself the delight with which I thought over all her words and glances. And even now, too, when Time hath shorn away the brown locks of youth and manhood,—now, when the bright blue eyes have become dim and shaded, and mine enfeebled limbs stiff and weak, and my "strong men bow

themselves,"—even now doth my breast glow with a fire not it's own, when I bethink me of that blissful hour. I was an unknown and unfriended soldier, beset with manifold hazards; – but what deemed I of poverty or peril, since the Lady Bride's last look and smile were unto me a world of wealth and glory! whilst the only touch of sorrow which I felt, was the fear that in this world I should see her face no more.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE BUILDING OF A ROYAL MAUSOLEUM, AND A SCENE AT THE PILGRIMS' HOSTEL IN SOUTHWARK.

Then munte I me forth the MINSTER to knowen.
And awaytede a woon, wonderly well ybuilt,
With arches on overich half, and belliche ycorven
With crocketes on corners, with knottés of gold.
Wide windows ywrought, ywritten full thick,
Shinen with shapen shields.———
* * * *
Though the tax of ten year were truly ygathered
N'olde it maken that House half as I trow.

PIERCE PLOUGHMAN'S CREDE.

Divers men and women will go thus after their own willes, and fyndyng out one pilgrimage.—And if these men and women be a moneth in their pilgrimage, many of them shall be an half-year after great janglers, tale-tellers and lyers.

THE STATE TRIALS.

SOME ten days passed away ere I betook me unto London, to make the Duchess Margaret's offering at Bermondsey Abbey; at the which I did not linger, for that the Lady Bride was no longer dwelling there; and so that fair and stately House seemed unto me like

a blank and gloomy void, since all that had given life or light unto it's walls was then far distant, either in the royal towers of Windsor, or in the shades of some holy convent which was unto me unknown. I made the Lady Margaret's last offering at the Abbey of St. Peter at Westminster; hastening thither with what speed I might, having a full intent to convey me again into France so soon as I should have performed the same, for that all I did regard as dear unto me in England, was now parted from me for ever.

Upon coming forth from the Abbey, I went me round unto the Eastern end thereof, to behold the foundations of that most stately Chapel which Harry Tudor had at this time newly begun there, for the burial-place of King Henry VI. as he affirmed, though indeed it was rather for the interment of his own body. Whilst I was looking thereon, an aged and venerable Monk, holding a scroll of vellum, and clothed in the black habit of the Benedictine Order, drew nigh unto the spot where I was standing, as though he were about to enter within the barriers of the building; and as he fixed his eyes upon me full steadfastly in passing by me, the unwonted custom of my youth suddenly returned unto me, and I accosted him,—albeit I know not why,—with our ancient convent-greeting of "*Benedicite me, Pater,*" which I had learned to address unto mine elders at Ely Monastery. Upon this he gazed at me more earnestly than before, and replied with the common response of

"*Fili mi, Dominus sit vobiscum;*" the which seeming unto me like a pleasant gale from the country of my youth, I again answered with "*Et tecum quoque, Reverendissime,*" at the same time making him the courteous *Antè* and *Retrò* reverence,* which had been taught me in my boyhood: for, as I knew that churchmen of high estate were oft-times great and wondrous builders, I knew not of what rank he might be whom I thus saluted, though such reverence should be paid only to an Abbot or Prior.

Howbeit, he declined with great lowliness the honour which I did thus offer him, saying, "Nay, my son, this salutation belongeth not unto me; for I am not the Lord Abbot of Westminster, for whom, questionless, you do mistake me. Do you seek speech with him?"

"No, in good sooth, Father," returned I, "but your voice and words sounded unto me so like what I did oft-times hear when a youth in St. Mary's Monastery at Ely, that I could not chuse but answer and bow me as I did."

* This was a peculiar manner of bowing by the monks, when they entered or left the choir; receiving it's name from their bending firstly *antè*, or to the altar *before* them, and then *retrò*, or *behind*, to the Abbot at the bottom of the choir. In making this bow, the back was to be lower than the loins, and the head than the back, which motion was considered as particularly graceful; the antè and retrò reverence was in general made only to the Abbot and Prior.

"A youth, said'st thou, in St. Mary's Monastery at Ely?" rejoined the Monk, "methought thy visage was not unknown to me, for I also am of that House. Had it not been reported that one Richard Fitz-Richard, who, some seventeen years since, was a pupil there,—was slain at the battle of Bosworth,—I should full surely deem that thou wert he."

"And in good sooth I am none other, most venerable Father," returned I, "whom, on my part, I take to be the pious and learned Austin, the Master of the Novices, to whose care I owed so much in mine early youth; and who would have made me far wiser than I am, had I been but as willing to learn as thou wert to teach."

"Alas! my son," responded the good Father Austin, for it was in truth no other than he, "alas! we be all alike blame-worthy therein; seeing that divine wisdom is for ever freely held out unto us, and yet the best of us desire not so full a blessing as the bounty of Heaven would pour into our bosoms. How well, therefore, said the Wisest of Men, '*Sapientia foris prædicat,*' Wisdom discourseth in the streets, and yet do we never regard her."

"I perceive, good Father," responded I hereunto, "that you remain unaltered, inasmuch as your every speech is still full of blended charity and instruction; but may I crave of your discretion to tell me how you are employed at this Chapel."

"Truly, good Richard," answered the Monk, "that will I readily shew you; so pass with me within the

barriers, and mark well these foundations, on which, '*si Dominus voluerit*,' if the Lord be willing,—as the blessed 'Postle James doth well teach us to say in all that we purpose to do hereafter,—there shall be raised so glorious an edifice, that I trow it shall be the marvel of distant generations, and earth shall have nought worthy of being placed beside it."

I did now follow the good Monk into the spacious works of that wondrous Chapel of Our Lady at Westminster, which is called by Henry's name, and whereof, at the time I do now write of, the first stone had been but lately posited: it being done, as a legend thereupon cut did declare in Latin, on Wednesday, the 24th day of January, in this very year 1503, at a quarter before three of the clock in the afternoon. The same was set in it's place by Harry Tudor, the Lady Margaret his mother, Abbot John Islip of Westminster, Sir Reginald Bray, and others. Of these last two I would here note that they were both most rare builders; the one having also reared him a Chapel in the Abbey at Westminster, the which is full thickly studded with devices of his name carved in stone: and for the other, it was he who built a kingdom for Richmond, since he found my father's coronet on the field of Bosworth; when the Lord Stanley, giving away that which he had no right in, made Harry a King by setting it upon his head.

Nevertheless, this Sir Reginald was a most skilful workman, and is oft-times said in story to have been

the only deviser of the Chapel at Westminster, because he was Comptroller of the Royal Works and buildings; but I wot well that Father Austin told and shewed me at this time, that the plat of the whole was drawn forth by the pious and learned John Alcock, Bishop of Ely, also a Master of those Works, before his death, the which plat was then given unto the chief masons of that place. They were to edify the same by written indenture with Father William Bolton, the Prior of St. Bartholomew's, made Master of the Works in the fore-named Chapel upon the death of Bishop Alcock and Sir Reginald Bray; and by him was it brought unto a fair conclusion some fourteen years after this.* Howbeit, Father Austin

* The persons mentioned above have both been esteemed as the Architects of King Henry the Seventh's Chapel at Westminster, especially the latter, as Bishop Alcock died Oct. 1st, 1500,—though he is thought entirely to have completed the design before his death,—and Sir Reginald Bray in Oct. 1503. They have been thus considered, because they both held the office noticed in the text; but in the description of the royal tomb, contained in the Will of Henry VII., the Prior of St. Bartholomew's is called "Master of the King's Works in that Chapel," and to him were delivered "the plat" for the building, signed by Henry himself, with pictures of the images, arms, and badges, for the painted glass of the windows. This ecclesiastic was William Bolton, who received the temporalities of his office Aug. 27th, 1505, the 21st year of Henry VII., and he continued Prior until his death in 1532. He is recorded to have been a great builder, who repaired the Priory

of Ely was mainly aiding herein, for that he had been a near friend of the Bishop's, and was also specially skilled in making of stately edifices; and when I made known unto him what I had seen and learned of that Art during my sojourn in Burgundy, he would fain have me as his fellow-workman: so that for awhile I laid aside my soldier's habit, and became a builder at Westminster, lodging with mine old tutor in the *Dormitorium* of the monks thereof.

Whiles that I am speaking of this part of my former years, I would note, that in very truth I never in my life saw aught so brave and glorious, so holy and grave a structure, as this Chapel of Henry Tudor. He lived not to see it orderly finished, albeit ere he deceased* it was covered in with that most wondrous fretted vaulting, which looketh as it had been made of woven wands changed into stone. Around the Chapel were many fair glass windows, shining with sacred stories and devices of Armory, rarely wrought upon them in rich colours; and divers fair altars were set up in several parts of the building, the which were well pro-

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and Parish Churches of St. Bartholomew, with the lodgings and offices of his own House, and to have erected a new manor-house at Canonbury by Islington, &c. Speed's statement, that Bishop Fox was concerned in the design of the King's Chapel, has been already referred to in a former note.

* Henry VII. died at Richmond, on Saturday, April 21st, 1509.

vided of costly vessels and furniture. But I trow that the richest sight of all, was Henry's own tomb in the midst, before the high-altar; it being of black touch-stone garnished in the choicest wise with many sculptures, pillars, and figures, of brass and copper overlaid with gold, wrought by the skill and cunning of one Peter Torrysany* of the City of Florence, Painter. Upon that tomb lay the effigies of Henry Tudor and the good Queen Elizabeth, as great as the life, in copper gilt; and at the four corners thereof sat winged boys bearing divers emblems, and his banner and device of the dragon. And about the whole sepulchre was there ordained a wondrous stately 'closure of pierced brass, in manner of a chapel, cast by the same skilful Florentine; and at the foot of the said tomb within, was an altar, having chantry-priests to say mass thereat for the soul of him who was sepultured beneath.

This, I say, was some part of the glory of that wondrous Chapel, when that it was finished; to behold the which so perfected, hath been one of the very

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* Pietro Torregiano, the celebrated Sculptor and contemporary of Michel-Angelo Buonarroti. Several of the original indentures or covenants for his works for the Tomb of Henry VII. are yet extant, which curiously illustrate the progress of the cemetery: that for the metal screen round the monument is dated October, 1512, and in 1516 another agreement appears for erecting a rich canopy and altar within the Chapel, to be finished by November 1st, 1519, which probably indicates the time of the completion of the whole edifice.

few causes of my coming forth from the retired solitude of mine old age. And, as I do now remember me, I saw it upon the Obit, or Anniversary of the death of Harry Tudor, in the year of Christ 1520; by the which time mine angry passions against him were so much allayed, that even I could speak my *Requiescat* over his tomb with the others. But surely no shrine of holy Confessor, spotless Virgin, or triumphant Martyr, ever shone so resplendently as did his Chapel at Westminster at that season. The high-altar there was decked with a mighty cross of wood plated over with gold, and a great effigy of the Virgin adorned with jewels: but within Henry's own sepulchre, I set down no fable when I say that there were an hundred large waxen tapers, standing about his hearse, that was garnished with banners, and pensils, and escutcheons, of fine gold. The brazen closure of the tomb, too, was all girt about with that solemn and stately band of black velvet, two feet broad, called by the French *Le Litre*, but with us in England, the Funeral Belt; which is proper unto great lords and Sovereign Princes, who have been Founders and Patrons of Churches.* At the altar, which stood

* This very ancient and extraordinary symbol of Funeral pomp, was used principally in France, and was generally ornamented with the arms of the deceased, and tears, skulls, and other emblems of death. The ribband, or belt used for Sovereigns was commonly of black silk, and that for nobles always

within Harry Tudor's sepulchre, all the furniture was shining with gold, and the hangings thereof were of black cloth-of-gold; the same being full richly set forth with a great piece of the Holy Cross, encased also in fine gold adorned with gems, and one of the legs of the valiant Martyr St. George, brought from Milan in Italy, set in silver and partly gilt. On every side, too, I wot, there might be seen marbles of divers colours, pillars of gilded copper, and imperial crowns and arms; with certain fine images, wondrously wrought in baken earth, pourtraying the histories of the Nativity and Resurrection of Our Lord, Angels kneeling with emblems of His Passion, and His effigy as taken dead from the cross, painted in so marvellous a manner as to look like very nature.

But albeit I may not in this little tome declare, one half part of the resplendent glories of that burial-place, I may not forget to note that there was brought unto it from the shrine of St. Edward the King and Confessor,—that image which Henry Tudor ordained to be made of himself in his last Will. It was choicely sculptured in wood, being wrought with plate of fine gold in manner of an armed man, having his coat-armour enamelled thereon, kneeling upon a table of silver and gilt, and holding the crown, which,—as Henry's Testament full cunningly saith,—" it pleased

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of cloth: it frequently passed entirely round the church, chapel, or burial-place, as well without as within.

God to give us, with the victory of our enemy at our first field." Truly I wot, that if he never spake truth before touching his claim unto the throne of this realm, herein he did it; inferring unto posterity that it was by right of conquest, by his own sword and his own bow; and neither by the questionless title of the good Queen Elizabeth, nor the call and consent of the nation.*

But now to leave speaking of this, and return again unto mine own story, I had not been occupied in the building of Harry Tudor's Chapel at Westminster past two years, when, a little before Lent in 1505, the pious Father Austin sickened and died in the *Dormitorium* of the Monastery there. His ending was full calm, and altogether such as became a Christian man; yet did he tell me that one thing lay full heavy upon his conscience; the which was, that whereas he had purposed and vowed, on his first coming unto London, to

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* Henry's claim to the crown by *descent* was utterly without foundation, resting only upon the title of his mother Margaret, daughter and heiress of John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset; who was the son of John Beaufort, the eldest son of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and fourth son of Edward III. The Duke, however, had this son and other issue by Catherine Swinford, not only before his marriage with her, but also in the life-time of Constance of Castile, his second wife; and though, in 1396, he procured an Act of Parliament by which they were made legitimate, a special exception was inserted of their thence deriving any right to the royal dignity.

make a devout pilgrimage unto the Shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury,—he had been letted and prevented thereof by aiding the Bishop of Ely in plotting out and founding Henry's Chapel. "Therefore," said he, "good Richard, my dear son in Christ, I pray you that you will undertake this travel for me, and it shall peradventure be of special good unto us both. I trow that I have often wished to behold the King's most stately Chapel completed, because I do well ween that the earth shall scarcely have it's fellow; but such was not the will of God, and to Him I gladly go hence, far from the building of this temple unto a better: '*Domum*,'—as the blessed 'Posile Powle well calleth the many-mansioned house of the Father of Our Lord,—'*Domum non manufactam, eternam in cœlis*;' an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

And with these, and the like Christian aspirations, went he unto his rest; and as soon as I might after his burial, in the second week in Lent,* what time Pilgrims do commonly journey unto Canterbury, I joined me unto a party then presently travelling thither, and lodging at the ancient and famous Tabard hostel in Southwark. We set forth about the hour of *Prime* on a fair fresh morning, being Tuesday, the 18th day of February, purposing to spend a month

* In the year 1505, Ash-Wednesday fell upon February 5th, and Easter Sunday on March 23rd.

on our pilgrimage, and to return again unto London toward the Feast of Easter.

Thus, therefore, did I behold the renowned Shrine of St. Thomas ere the late boisterous son of Harry Tudor had despoiled it, and even blotted the name of the Archbishop from the calendars and service-books of the Church; and well I wot that there were few sepulchres more resplendent than that wherein the remains of his body rested, unto the which it was transferred by the wise Cardinal Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury. The said Shrine stood upon high, covered by a carved wooden box, which was drawn up by cords, and disclosed unto our view a tomb, whereof the basest part was of massive gold, for every thing around it sparkled and shined with very large and rare jewels. Then did the Prior recount unto us the names of their several donors, touching each with a white wand, and telling the name and price of the gem; and in truth most of them were the gifts of Sovereign Princes. But I beheld also what the monks of Canterbury feign, as I think, to esteem much beyond these riches, namely, the reliques of St. Thomas: such as his leg, like a long thin reed, plated over with silver; his whole face set in gold and jewels; and his coarse gown and sudarium, yet covered with the stain of his blood. There were, likewise, in this most ancient Church many other sights of great pomp and glory, which have since been despoiled and ruined, when that the late Henry's Visitors plundered the

riches of Canterbury; being the Blessed Virgin's Shrine in the vaults beneath, and the vast pomp of vestments and golden furniture in the *Vestiaria*. Nevertheless, I noted in one place, a little wooden altar unto the holy Mary, which is reported to be very ancient, and in truth it might have belonged unto the Church when her pastors could declare "Silver and gold have we none," albeit they had the greater wealth of saying unto such as were sick, "Arise and walk!" —And of late years, in my retreat from the world, I have pondered much and earnestly, upon men's costly and almost boundless building, beautifying, and enriching Churches; and, peradventure, my thoughts do somewhat differ from those that I had at the time whereof I now write. Some, I trow, do it for fame after their deaths; others, to make restitution of ill-gotten riches; and, questionless, some out of pure devotion unto God and his service: yet cannot I but think that such great wealth hath been the main cause of the vicious lives and pride of the late monks of England. It is full hard to keep a holy course with an abundance of this world's goods, or to carry a flowing cup without spilling; but I nevertheless deem it sacrilegious plunder to seize, as the second Harry Tudor hath of late done, upon the possessions of the Churches and Monasteries, and confiscate them unto himself, depriving their priests and brethren of their support and shelter, because they were so hapless as to have riches. Certes, in all Churches and

Religious Houses, I would have the vestments and vessels grave and stately, fitted unto the holy service and the sovereignty of God: but to what purpose is it that men do spend all their substance upon golden fonts and candlesticks, images and organs, rare sculptures and 'broidered hangings for our earthly temples, when so many of our brethren and sisters of mankind, —Christ's living temples,—be ready to perish with hunger and thirst?

Howbeit, it was of the glories of these things that the company of Pilgrims did most speak, what time we returned unto the Tabard Hostel in Southwark some ten days before Easter, and were taking a parting supper together with our host. All men do well know that broad and spacious Inn, with it's wide gateway opening unto the street, and the great court within, and galleries of lodging-rooms round about it; and it seemeth that almost all men repair unto it, for, beside the party with which I had now returned, there were divers going unto Canterbury against Easter, or travelling from other shrines back into the South parts of the realm. All these were full of talking and vain disputations as to the marvels they had seen, and the holiness of the shrines whereto they had travelled; some affirming that St. Thomas passed all beside, and others that Our Lady of Walsingham was without peer. Divers, moreover, had brought back with them little else than the disports which be strangely, though full commonly, used in such jour-

nies, as the merry tunes, the lewd songs, and the wild tales that they had heard therein. For some pilgrims do carry pipers with them, so that every town they ride through, what with the noise of their singing and sound of their piping, the ringing of those bells which be given them as tokens at Canterbury, and the barking of dogs after their train,—they make as great outcry as if the King rode by with all his clarions and minstrels.* But, natheless, there were some of that company at the Tabard, whose religious zeal was truly quickened by hearing of the acts, and seeing of the reliques of God's Saints and Martyrs, or looking upon his most ancient and holy Churches: the which, perchance, is most of the good that is to be found in pilgrimage.

But I trow others did contrariwise think their travel to have been enow to blot out a whole life of guilt, and even to be a license under which they might commit new crimes; and of this sort seemed unto me a rustic-looking man, whose fierce visage was covered with red hair, and whose coarse habit shewed him to be of low degree and breeding. He had joined our com-

* When these very indecorous practices were objected to Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, he defended them by saying that pipers and singers went with pilgrims, that when those who travelled barefoot struck their feet against a stone and made them bleed,—they should begin a song, or play away their hurt by a tune on the bag-pipes.

pany a little space out of Canterbury, albeit I had not noted him until we got unto the Tabard; when I found him to be a free and bold knave, though wondrously well-spoken after his blunt fashion. Then did he tell us all that he sought to take service with Lord John de Marlow, the Prior of Bermondsey, in his grange or elsewhere, for that now the land was at peace there was no more want of soldiers. "Howbeit, my masters," added he, "as your roving lance-man would make but a sorry son of the Church without clean shriving, I have now made me the two great pilgrimages unto Our Lady of Walsingham and St. Thomas of Canterbury, and trow that I'm as meek as a maiden, and pure as the new-born infant."

Then, as I have said, divers of our company did familiarly speak of the marvels which they had seen in their several journies; and such as had been afore-time in foreign parts, did tell of many holy things of great wonder which be yet kept therein. Thus, one spake of the coat of Our Lord at Constantinople, the same being without seams and called "*tunica inconsumpta*"; together with the cross of the good thief Dymas. Another told of the most ancient City of Cologne, where he beheld the uncorrupted bodies of the three blessed Kings, who followed the wondrous star unto Bethlehem of Judea: whilst a third one did affirm that he had been in Geneway, and had there looked upon the *Saint-Graal* or Holy Vessel, marvellously made of a fair and single emerald; wherefrom

men do say that Our Lord did eat of the last Passover-Lamb at Paske-tide! * But the rustic person whom I spake of afore, told us another sort of histories for his share of the disport, touching that which he had seen in his pilgrimage unto Walsingham. Such I trow was his strange report of "the Good Sword of Winfarthing,"† in Norfolk, which would recover the strayed or stolen horses of them that lighted unto it a taper and sought it's aid; unto the which he added another marvel in yet these words in this rude, though wondrous, ballad that followeth.

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* This supposed relique, which forms so very prominent a feature in the romance of King Arthur, being an object of search to all the Knights of the Round-Table,—appeared in Genoa first in 1101, having been found at the capture of Cæsarea, and presented by Baldwin, King of Jerusalem. It remained at Genoa until it was removed, with other spoil, to the Imperial Library at Paris, in November 1806, when it was found to be only of fine green glass, though probably of ancient manufacture: it is hexangular in shape, and measures twelve French inches in diameter and three in height. It was originally supposed to have the gift of working miracles, and especially of curing diseases.

† This singular relique is also affirmed to have had the power of assisting such females as lighted a taper before it every Sunday in the year, by shortening the lives of their spouses. It is, nevertheless, said that it was originally the sword of a robber who had taken sanctuary in the churchyard, and, escaping thence, left it behind him; when, after having lain several years in an old chest, the parson and clerk converted it into a relique with considerable success.

The Wicket of Walsingham.

Of England and her ancient Knights doth many a minstrel tell,
And their mighty deeds of daring-do their lays and legends swell,
And the marvels they beheld of old are sung both wide and far,
With their noble faith in love, and their gallantry in war;
But I ween a better tale was never told in camp or court,
Than the Wicket-gate of Walsingham and Ralph De Botetourt.

A braver soldier never braced a cuirass to his breast,
A taller champion never raised in tilt or field his crest,
A stouter wight a stronger barb across did never stride,
And he rear'd himself full loftily when forth he 'gan to ride;
And broad and high must spread the gate of barbican or fort,
Wherein might pass the mounted Knight, Sir Ralph De Botetourt.

To Walsingham in wildest speed he comes in arms array'd,
His mail-shirt rent with battle-strokes, with blood upon his blade,
And a vengeful host behind him spurring on in hot career,
He swiftly rides, yet cheek and eye are all unchanged by fear:
Though well I ween their hasty course is not in mirth or sport,
Or that little hazard put to flight Sir Ralph De Botetourt.

He speeds him to the Sanctuary that lies before him straight,
But how may flight avail him aught at yonder narrow gate

That scarcely spreads an ell in height, or a yard in space between,
When full ten feet that mounted Knight and war-horse stand I ween?
His foemen deem his blood to spill at the Abbey's lowly port,
"Now Christ protect thee from their swords! Sir Ralph De Botetourt."

"Oh haste thee on my barb!" he cries, "slack not thy swift career,
To save thy fainting master's life from the vengeful foeman's spear;
It is not from an equal strife, nor the battle-field's array
That I call thee with a coward speed to bear me hence to-day,
But a lurking host assails me now of fierce and foul report,
Yet some have felt the blade, I trow, of Ralph De Botetourt."

A fervent and a silent vow he made within his breast,
He breathed a soldier's hasty prayer as on his barb he press'd;
Then cheer'd once more his gallant steed, with stedfast heart and faith
That the Virgin would be with him still, in safe retreat or death:
To Her and to Her Son alone now look'd he for support,
Since vain were flight and valour both to Ralph De Botetourt.

A sudden bound the charger makes,—the foe is on his flanks,
With pointed spears and ready blades uplifted in their ranks!
And—Holy Saints!—the low arch spreads!—the Knight is safe within!
And without his wond'ring enemies stand baffled in their sin!

The good Sir Ralph rejoiced him then, for mortal wight had ne'er
A greater miracle to aid in hour of his despair;
He graved his image on the gate of that most blessed court,
And so, God rest the pious Knight, Sir Ralph de Botetourt!

As this ballad was brought unto an end, an aged and reverend Palmer, who was of our company, said "Lordings all, I well ween that this is a full true story; howbeit, there seemeth unto me to be some pious mystery hidden therein. For the Knight and his foemen may well prefigure man pursued by the Fiend, against whom he cannot stand; and so flieth he for refuge unto God, who is shadowed forth by His earthly Church. But, in his unsanctified condition, man is as it were a giant in his sins; who cannot enter at that portal which Our Lord calleth '*Porta angusta et via arcta quæ ducit ad vitam*,' the strait gate and narrow way which doth lead unto life. Wherefore, being pressed hard by his enemy, the fugitive calleth upon God, and voweth himself as a holy offering unto his Son, and lo! the gate of Heaven at last spreads itself to receive him into an invincible sanctuary, against which both men and demons may strive in vain."

"A most goodly morality truly!" hereupon exclaimed another of our company; "who might have deemed, now, that such wisdom lurked in that old story? I trow that I've oft-times heard it told and

sung, and looked on the brazen image of the Knight at Walsingham, and many other goodly sights there, albeit I never yet thought a word of the mystery thereof. And speaking of goodly sights, my masters, I trow that one of the fairest that can be looked upon, will be when the Bishop of Winchester shall sing the high-mass at Bermondsey Abbey at Easter, and give the veil unto certain noble ladies who were wont to dwell there, for the more honour to that House: and men say that one of them is the sister of the late King Edward and Queen Elizabeth, the Lady Bride Plantagenet, who is even now lodging there."

At that beloved name it is no marvel if I started, as in truth I did, inwardly resolving to be present at her Consecration, and even devising how I might behold her before that rite should part her from me for ever. But suppressing my present transports for awhile, that I might get more knowledge herein, I questioned him who had last spoken, with what calmness I could, if, peradventure, he knew in what part of the Abbey the Lady Bride was lodging.

"Aye, marry," answered he, "for I dwell not far distant, and I have often marked her lamp in her chamber in the Abbot's house, overlooking his fair garden and maze. I wot, moreover, that she ever walks forth on that green-sward to chaunt her hymns at even-tide."

Hereupon I did enquire no farther, but hastily quitted the table at the hostel with an anxious heart,

and walked forth into the highway of Southwark to consider how I might best shape my future course. It was a clear and fresh Spring even, and the young moon was riding high in the heavens, and it seemed unto me near the fitting hour to adventure what I had thus hastily thought on; for that in the broad day-light I might not hope to seek an interview with a professed virgin at the Abbey of Bermondsey. Whilst I thus pondered, my footsteps all unwittingly wandered thither, but when I had thus arrived there I knew not at first how to effect mine intent, and I roved around the Abbey like one crazed with moody madness; yet finding neither cunning to proceed nor resolution to withdraw. It might be that I passed nearly an hour of perplexed and lonely musing, often looking toward the Lady Bride's window, when I bethought me that, as it was near the time of *Complin*, when the Brethren would be at prayers, perchance I might be able to mount the wall of the Abbey-garden, and meet with her in that even walk whereof the guest at the Tabard had told me. But upon looking at the lofty boundaries which girdled in that ancient House, I almost gave up the enterprise in despair, until I noted that on the North side, where the Church of St. Mary Magdalen joined unto the Abbey-wall, the same was greatly decayed and fallen away; perchance because some of the Abbots, coveting rather to fill their own purses than to keep up the fence of God's fold, had let the stone boundary sink into ruin.

And here I saw, that although it might prove no easy matter to scale it from within, yet might I with small labour surmount the wall from without; since, by reason of the manifold burials there, the earth of the graves and dust of the mouldering bodies had much raised the ground; and, farther, a table-tomb unto the memory of Master Geoffrey Gresham, the far-famed Fletcher, had been reared by that part of the wall which was most decayed. Upon this tomb lay the rare effigy of the rich Fletcher, with his staunch hound carved at his feet, and by these I saw that I could easily mount and lower myself on the other side, by making a cord fast round the dog's head, or elsewhere as I listed; ascending again unto the Church-yard when I had seen the damsel, or when danger approached to bid me escape.

I saw in this device such hope of success, that I did at once determine to provide me with a ladder of cord,—which I might easily get me in Southwark,—because, the good hour was now wearing fast away. When I returned unto Bermondsey, the bell had already tolled the hour of seven, the service of *Complin* was being sung, and the Brethren were all in their Church; I did therefore presently take forth my cords, which were knotted together like the shrouds of a vessel, and, making them fast unto the tomb, ascended thereon, and committed myself unto Providence. Having, as I have before noted, already been at this Abbey, I well knew that the left-hand walk,

South of the Church, would lead me unto the Prior's maze, being a grove of lilacs and overhanging laburnum-trees, which was wont to be the Lady Bride's walk at even; wherein I might well secure me from all notice. And so mounted I the wall with cautious and silent movements, and seeing none within to oppose my passage, I forthwith descended into that tranquil spot, which as it were lay sleeping before me, in all the calm beauty of a spring-tide moonlight.

CHAPTER XIX.

A NIGHT-ADVENTURE AT BERMONDSEY ABBEY BEFORE IT'S DISSOLUTION.

I'll tell thee, by my faithen,
That sometimes I have known
A fair and goodly Abbey,
Stand here of brick and stone:
And many a holy friar,
As I may say to thee,
Within these goodly cloisters
I did full often see.

BALLAD OF PLAIN TRUTH AND BLIND IGNORANCE.

It were a world to tell what then I thought,
What joy I saw, what pleased my listening ear,
What hand I held that free consent had brought,
What haste I had that constant truth did bear:
* * * *
But lo! Alas! they were but shadow'd shews,
For, when I woke, my summer sun was gone?
My wonted clouds within my head arose
And, storming, straight thus 'gan I make my moan:
"Ah! Goddes good! why do I live again,
To lose my joy, and find my former pain?"

THE GARDEN-PLOT, BY HENRY GOLDINGHAM.

WHEN I thus found me alone within the gardens of Bermondsey Abbey, my soul became filled with a pious and solemn feeling well befitting that holy place,

though blent with doubts and hopes touching my present enterprise. These did keep me for some brief space, riveted, as it were, unto the spot whereon I stood, and intently gazing upon the scene around me; so that I do well remember how looked that Abbey, ere it was resigned by it's coward Abbot unto the second Harry Tudor,* who seized upon many a fair heritage with which good men of old had endowed the Church, and gave unto others that which was in truth not his own. They who now behold this place, I wot shall see but little of what I have here noted; because the most part of those fair buildings which were once devoted unto the service of God, have been thrown down, and the very stones thereof

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* It has been supposed that Robert Wharton, or Parfew, the last Abbot of Bermondsey, and successor to John de Marlow, mentioned in the above narrative, was actually put into that office by the Court, that he might surrender the Abbey and it's revenues to the crown. This he did by a voluntary instrument of resignation dated January 1st, in the 29th year of Henry VIII., 1538, anticipating the Act for suppressing the greater Religious Houses, which passed July 29th in the next year. The Abbot had been made Bishop of St. Asaph in June, 1536, and on his surrender received a pension of 500 marks, £333 : 6*s.* 8*d.* Bermondsey Abbey was granted in 1541 to Sir Robert Southwell, Master of the Rolls, who sold it to Sir Thomas Pope in the same year, by whom the ancient conventual buildings were taken down, and a mansion erected with the materials as referred to in the text.

used to set up a vain-glorious dwelling-place for man.

But I will now assay to picture it, as I beheld it nearly fifty years past, before it's candlestick was moved out of it's place.—I have afore said that the young moon shone brightly over grange and green-sward, lighting and gilding refectory and hall, church and dormitory with it's lustre: for upon my right hand spread out the Abbot's curious maze and fair garden, with the long trim alleys and winding walks thereof. Before me arose his stately stone lodgings, standing in the great Base-Court; and behind me was the Abbey-Church, the windows whereof were shining with the light within, whilst the swell of the organ and slow psalm of the monks, came ever and anon upon the fresh gale of even as it passed me by. On mine other hand stood the great North gate, and the dwellings and offices of the Brethren; and far out upon the South, I might discern the warren, grange, and pasture-fields of the Abbot.

Having thus for a brief space gazed around me, almost lost in thought, I did next turn me unto the little grove of which the pilgrim had spoken, and, forcing aside the leaves and branches thereof, presently so concealed myself in it's bower, that I was assured that none, who should not part the trees as I had done, might perceive that a stranger was there hidden. The same holy silence seemed to reign around that spot, yet was not mine own breast without somewhat

of disquiet, since I felt that my present act was one which I might not openly avow; for though I purposed nought but good in again seeking to behold the Lady Bride, yet did I question with myself whether I were not sinful, in thus covertly approaching a spot which was consecrated unto the service of God. Nevertheless these thoughts were full soon put to flight, by doubts and fears that peradventure I had outstaid the Lady Bride's hour, and so should not behold her even now that I was within the walls of the very place of her sojourn. But as the moon went down the sky, and the light passed away, the rising gale swept along the leaves which formed my bower, and brought with it strains of sweet and holy music. At first methought it was only the choral swell of the monks in their Abbey, but anon I knew the voice and found it to be in the garden itself; and these were the words which came unto mine hearing.

EVENING HYMN OF THE LADY BRIDE PLANTAGENET.

Before the closing of the light,
God of our life, we cry to Thee,
That through the darkness of the night
Thy wonted care may round us be;
And that Thy mercy, great and free,
May keep all evil sprites away,
Until the dawning of the day.

DOMINE, CLAMO AD TE,
DOMINE, EXAUDI ME!

The visions of the midnight hour
Do Thou from sin all holy keep,
That no foul dreams nor phantom's power
May stain our souls, or fright our sleep:
But chain them in the fiery deep,
That neither night nor noon may find
The Demon's spells within our mind.
DOMINE, CLAMO AD TE,
DOMINE, EXAUDI ME!

Thus, ever prove our hope and stay,
Our shield when danger doth affright;
Our Pillar of the Cloud by day,
Our fiery column through the night;
Until we reach Thy realm of light
Where our glad souls shall ever be
Glorious and safe,—because with Thee!
DOMINE, AD TE CLAMAMUS,
ET IN SÆCULUM LAUDAMUS!

The sound of this music was so sweet unto me, that neither by speech nor movement, and scarcely by breathing, did I interrupt the harmony; and even when all was hushed I still continued to listen. Howbeit, anon I heard approaching feet, and two females drew nigh unto my hiding-place, one of whom mine anxious eyes soon discovered to be the Lady Bride; and the other methought I remembered as one of those Austin Nuns whom I had seen with her at Windsor, and who seemed to be counselling her as to the holy duties whereon she should soon enter for life. "And

furthermore, dear Sister," I might well hear her say, "when that ye retire unto your bed, bless you with the sign of the cross, committing your soul and body unto your spouse Christ, and the keeping of your good Angel. Then lay you down reverently with your arms crossed upon your breast, being diligently aware of vain thoughts, and quickly putting away of vain temptations; and, if you may not sleep, then occupy yourself with prayers or with your rosary, because your adversary the Fiend never sleepeth."

I now noted that the Lady Bride did desire of her companion, to leave her awhile unto her own meditations in that fair and lonely spot; for that she would ponder over the Rule whereto she was to be consecrated. "And herein do I much commend you, Sister Bride," responded the Nun, "for it is profitable and ghostly lore to think much upon our Rule of Life, with the Exposition thereof by the holy Abbot Hugh of St. Victoire. Ever live up unto it, I pray you, keep it, read it, know it by heart and practice, declare, teach, and openly shew it: that so you may reck not who sees or marks it, and be afraid of nought, *that* being duly held and performed. Benedicite, Sister, tarry not long in the garden, and so I commit you unto God."

The Nun then presently left the noble Novice, and I heard a door close after her departure, whereupon I could scarcely believe mine own good-fortune, in thus having so speedily the chance which I had doubt-

fully hoped for: and yet when the Lady Bride next drew near me in her pious musings, I feared to present myself unto her on the sudden, lest I should alarm her; or, peradventure, be exposed unto the view of some watcher. Howbeit, as the time was now hastily wearing, whilst she was turned from me I left the bower, and, having looked around to see if any were near, and being satisfied that none were present beside that fair damsel and myself, I cautiously went towards her and addressed her with much lowliness of speech. Nevertheless, full great was her amaze at the sight of me and sound of my voice, as she demanded, with almost breathless haste, why I had so ventured unto her who had now no part in the world; conjuring me forthwith to save myself by flight.

"Think not of my safety, Lady," answered I, "since it is all too unworthy to deserve the care of one so noble and pious as yourself. Yet did I desire to behold you once more ere you depart from the world, to assure you of mine entire devotion, and to say that if even by the sacrifice of my life I can serve you, it will be indeed a happiness unto me to lay it down."

"I doubt not of your devotion, kind friend," replied the noble Novice, "since I have proved it too often to make question thereof; but remember that I have nothing now either to hope or fear in this world, and, therefore, the looser be my ties unto it the more

easily will they be severed. If, then, thou comest hither only to express thy good-will unto me, believe that I know and feel it, peradventure more than I ought: take my thanks, then, and depart, for, credit me, thy danger is great shouldest thou be discovered."

I now explained unto the Lady Bride, how that I had heard by chance of her being presently at Bermondsey, the which had made me resolve to see her, if it might be effected, and take mine eternal farewell of her: adding thereto, albeit with presumptuous speech, that I feared no dangers, since in such an enterprise I would almost have braved the wrath of Heaven itself!

"May God pardon us both! Richard," returned the noble Damsel, looking upwards, "and for thy bold words, it seemeth as if the wrath of Heaven, whereof thou speakest so lightly, were eftsoons about to fall upon us. Behold how fiercely the moon hath sunken, and the skies are overclouded; surely we are sinning, and I most so: therefore depart, Plantagenet, whilst yet you may with safety."

And even as she spake, I could not but note that the heavens grew darker and wondrously disturbed by the rising storm, yet from this I felt no terror; for that I deemed not myself or mine adventure in that place had called it forth as a sign of vengeance from on high. I therefore said unto her, "Lady, believe not that this tempest cometh upon us in anger, but think rather that it depicteth the gloom in mine

heart and the wild tumult in my breast, at being thus parted from you for ever." I did also entreat her not to fear for mine easy escape thence, telling her of the means by which I had entered the Abbey-garden, and adding thereunto mine earnest desire that she would depart with me by the same course; for that we were of the very last of the Houses of York and Plantagenet, and 'twere pity that such noble names should ever die.

"Truly," responded the royal Bride, "if thou art indeed the Duke of Gloucester's son, thou art the last man of thy name; for my hapless cousin Edward hath already fallen on the scaffold, though his sister Margaret yet lingereth on a doubtful life.* Yet if we

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* Edward Plantagenet, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, eldest son and heir of George, Duke of Clarence, was confined by his Uncle, Richard III., in Sheriff-Hutton Castle, Yorkshire; but on the accession of Henry VII. was removed to the Tower, being then fifteen years old, and more closely confined, because he was supposed to be the only male Plantagenet then living. Having attempted to escape with Perkin Warbeck, he was arraigned of high-treason, being charged with attempting to rescue that adventurer and make him King; when, having been induced by a promise of security, to confess that with which he was wholly unacquainted, he was condemned and beheaded on Tower Hill, November 28th, 1499. Margaret Plantagenet, his sister, survived till May 27th, 1541, when she also was decapitated, though without arraignment or trial.

be the last of our lineage, let us not tarnish it's lustre by an act which is dishonourable and unlawful; and such I ween would be to fly with thee, from the holy profession which I have made unto Heaven."

As she spake thus, I had gently drawn her towards the place whereat I had entered, to assure her of my safety and the means of conveying her thence; by shewing her the ladder of cord hanging upon the wall, for I doubted not that it would be still there. But, lo! it was now no-where to be seen, and notwithstanding I searched all around I looked for it in vain. I was much dismayed hereat, albeit I sought, as I best might, to hide my loss from the gentle Lady Bride; yet did she quickly note the cause of my perplexity, and said, in a voice of tender sorrow, that she deemed my sanguine hopes had trusted unto unequal means of escape, and that now my danger was all too certain. "Dearest Lady," replied I, hereupon greatly encouraged by the anxiety which she had shewn for me, "Dearest Lady, fear not; but even should I be taken in this adventure, in what better cause than your's can I lay down my life? This is unto me an hour of deepest interest, as was that in the Canons' chambers at Windsor, and I will again use all sincerity in my speech, and say, Lady Bride, how fervently I love you. Believe me, if the lightening-flashes, now darting from yonder cloud, could shine into my breast, you would behold in it a heart, which, from the first time I heard your blessed name,

hath never ceased to beat for you with the liveliest devotion; and whilst life is given unto it, I swear by my part in the bliss of Eternity that it shall beat for no other!"

"I can well think thee faithful, Richard," responded the Lady Bride, "yet say it not unto *me*, I pray thee, since it is now all unmeet for me to speak of earthly love; albeit if mortal excellence *could* win mine heart, thy generous passion for me would assuredly do it. But this may not be, therefore take back thy promise, and give thy vows unto those who live for this world, since I am all devoted unto another."

There was in her demeanour, as it seemed, a settled purpose which well attested her sincerity; yet, as I sighed despondingly at her words, methought she appeared touched by my sorrow, although I dare not say that she shared it: like as a pitying angel mourneth over the weakness of humanity, even whilst his heavenly nature keepeth it from his own breast. The noble Bride did moreover give farther proof of her benevolence towards me, by drawing from her hand a ring with a rich gem, bearing for it's impress the sign of the holy cross; and, giving it unto me, bade me, with consoling speech, to wear it, not for her sake, but for the sake of Him whose sign was graven upon it. I received her gift with much rapture, and I trow never did I so deeply lament my narrow fortune, as I did in bethinking me that I had nought to give unto her in return. Howbeit, I re-

membered that in my bosom I had a little book of Offices, partly written and illumined by mine own hand, fairly bound in red velvet 'broidered with gold, and this I hastily took forth, and besought the Lady Bride to receive the same at my hands, as a pledge that, for her sake, I did abjure all thought of wedlock; adding that I would ever wear her ring when I should be seen of woman, that so I might be known of all as a betrothed-one.

"Betrothed, indeed!" responded the royal Novice, "not unto me, but unto God as I well trust; for His am I, and the best wish of my heart for thee is that thou wert the same!"

She could say no more, for now divers lights, beside those which flashed from the stormy skies, came forth from all parts of the building and filled the garden, whilst loud and angry voices on every side declared that a stranger had entered it's holy precincts; the which at once shewed unto me that discovery had taken place, albeit I knew not how, and that escape was now impossible. Howbeit I manned myself to meet them as I best might; but the Lady Bride, overcome at once by fear for my safety, the increased violence of the storm, and the pious conflicts within her own breast, sank down and swooned upon mine arm: whilst I supported her with what tenderness I could, taking off my coarse Pilgrim's mantle and wrapping it around her. Those whose coming had been thus tumultuously made known unto us, soon drew near,

being a band of divers servitors of the Abbey, hastily summoned together by the Lord Abbot on the tidings which he had received; with whom they proceeded unto the garden, to put forth, or, peradventure, to secure for vengeance, the sacrilegious intruder who had violated the hallowed sanctuary.

"Holy St. Mary!" exclaimed the Lord Abbot as he approached the spot whereon the Lady Bride and myself were standing, and the light of the torches, with which the various servitors pressed forward, flashed upon us,—"Blessed St. Mary! what do I behold?—the Lady Bride!—Now, may God so speed us, as we would have held this a foul slander, had we not seen with our own eyes the daughter of a King and sister of a Queen consorting with a night-ruffian! one of whom our Lord well speaketh in the Gospel, saying '*Qui non intrat per ostium in ovile ovium, sed ascendit aliunde, ille fur est, et latro*;' he who entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. Seize him, therefore, my children, let him not 'scape; for if justice be maintained in England, it must fall upon such as profane the Houses of God."

The servitors whom he brought with him were not slow to execute his commands with much contumely and reviling, so that it was almost in vain for me to attempt to speak, whilst many hands at once grasped my garments and restrained my limbs.—Nevertheless the Lady Bride still clung unto me

senseless, whereupon I shook myself free from the servitors, and bearing her unto the Abbot, resigned her unto him; bidding him work his will with me, so that she were instantly conveyed unto a fitting shelter. This he straightway commanded to be done,—and so were we again parted; yet natheless I felt me glad, even in that troublous hour, when I found that the swooning of the Lady Bride brought upon my head all the fault which I feared should have fallen upon her's. For now the Abbot, again taking up the word, addressed me with "Monster of impiety! love of godliness I well deem thou hast none, yet do I marvel that thou hast lost all sense of fear; for though thou mightest brave the power of man, yet how didst thou dare, presumptuous as even thou art, to defy the wrath of Heaven which cometh forth against thee from the skies? Wast thou not afraid to attempt beguiling the daughter of a Sovereign, or to withdraw from her holy 'spousals the innocent lamb devoted unto the cloister? and that too, even in the storm which spake full loudly how the anger of God was already kindled against thee."

His tone was not less solemn than reproachful, and, deeming me guilty, I have since thought that he might well speak thus, and point for confirmation of his words unto the skies, which were still ever and anon bright with the lightening. Then, noting the heavy torrents of rain which were falling, he stopped mine attempted reply, saying, "And even the

waters that now deluge the earth seem, with fitting emblem, to reproach thy crime, as if the skies wept that such daring evil should stain the beauty of God's lower world.—But the tempest rages fiercely; lead on the prisoner, my children, and let us go hence."

They who had me in charge, then quickly and rudely hurried me from the garden into the broad Abbey-hall, where a fire was blazing, and many persons were assembled full curious to know more of that night's adventure. Of this company there was one whom I had in no wise thought to behold, being none other than the rustic Pilgrim from the Tabard hostel. I soon found that it was he who had betrayed me unto the Abbot; for he recounted how it had been told at the Inn, that the Lady Bride was presently living at Bermondsey until her Consecration at Easter; how he had marked my sudden starting and going forth; and how he had closely dogged my steps, watched mine actions, and finally removed my ladder: catching up and repeating, moreover, those half-uttered words by which men do oft-times indicate their concealed purposes.

"And what evil had I done unto thee," said I at length, looking full sternly at mine accuser, "that thou shouldest thus malevolently——Ha!—what!—Bernard Schalken!" I exclaimed, as the light for a moment fell full upon his fierce and reckless visage, and his hair was suddenly blown aside,—"is it

indeed Bernard Schalken? nay, then, I will demand no farther of one to whom good faith is all unknown."

"What says this man, fellow?" then enquired the Abbot of Bermondsey, "art thou in truth that Bernard Schalken, who served Sir James Tyrrell, what time the deaths of the Princes Edward and Richard were in question, and who afterwards passed into the train of the late usurper's favourite, Sir Gilbert De Mountford?—If thou art indeed he, begone at once, nor hope for entertainment here: since thou hast ever had the name of a brawling and violent soldier, and so art all unfit to serve in a House consecrated unto God."

"Why I trow well," hereunto replied the rude Soldier, "that there may be holier ones than your wandering lance-men, and that I've been no better than my fellows: but then I wot that I've journeyed both to Canterbury and Walsingham, to get me absolution from all that I've done heretofore, and so I threw the load of my sins into the cowls of the priests who took my confession there. And, now, by the Mass! I take myself to be all another man, and a mighty good Christian; whereof I took this certificate from the friars that absolved me. Well I deem that I bade them make it an ample testimonial, on peril of their bones, albeit I read neither Latin nor English. An ye desire, therefore, for somewhat to recommend me to your favour, Lord Abbot, read me o'er this scroll,

the which, the priests said, should speed me any where."

And with these irreverent words Bernard Schalken drew forth a piece of vellum, with two names and signs of the cross subscribed thereunto, the which when the Abbot had read, he answered in somewhat of a scoffing voice, "Truly this certificate shall speed thee away from every place where thou shalt shew it; for I see that the good priests who have subscribed it deem of thee much as I do. Howbeit, in the hope that the knowledge of this writing may lead thee unto repentance and amendment of life, listen whilst I construe it unto thee.

"'Forasmuch as I find Bernard Schalken, the bearer hereof, to be a brawling robber and lewd and impenitent soldier, I absolve him from all his good deeds, of which I find few or none in him; and I restore unto him all his evil acts, whereof he hath an abundance,—until he shall repent him heartily, make restitution for his plunder and life of violence, and resolve, by God's grace, to live hereafter unto His glory. Witness my hand, on the Feast of St. Matthias the Apostle, the Sixth of the Calends of March: NICHOLAS BLUNT, Priest of the Shrine of Our Lady at Walsingham.

"'I also do fully concur in the foregoing, and in token thereof have subscribed my name unto the same, this Sixth of the Ides of March, the commemoration of the Forty Martyrs of Sebaste: STEPHEN

PLAINWAYS, Priest of the Shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury, Archbishop and Martyr.'"*

"How now, fellow," added the Abbot unto the Soldier when he had finished reading his certificate, "this is a goodly testimonial unto thy life, truly! what sayest thou hereunto?"

"But little unto you, Lord Abbot," then responded the unabashed Bernard, "saving that I ween all priests be alike knaves; but to others, perchance, I may tell a longer and graver tale for their foul leasing-making. An in truth I be not absolved, let them look to it who made me think so, for 'twas enough that I believed it; and well I wot that the fragments of the fair gold chain which I left at their Shrines, might have blotted out worser crimes than mine."

"Impenitent and hardened man!" then began the Lord Abbot in a bold and severe voice, for the honest zeal whereof I could not but laud him in mine own mind, although he entreated me with much evil and contumely,—"Ill-minded and ignorant sinner! is the offering unto God of such a base portion of thy plunder, like a maimed and spotted sacrifice, to blot out the crimes of a whole life of violence, rapine, and blood? In truth it was an abomination, being like unto that whereof the Prophet Malachy speaketh, saying, '*Non est Mihi voluntas in vobis, dicit Dominus*

* Similar language to the above is actually used by Erasmus in his Colloquy of the Life of a Soldier.

Exercituum, et munus non suscipiam de manu vestra.' My will is not in you, saith the Lord of Hosts, and I will not receive an offering at your hands. Believe it, unhappy man, that the penitent psalm '*Miscrere me Deus,*' uttered with bended knees and sorrowful heart at God's altar, with a single penny given to the poor, and a firm purpose to lead a new life, shall do more towards winning the grace of Heaven, than if thou hadst walked barefoot from hence to Palestine, and gave the collected spoil of thy whole life unto the shrines of Christendom. Depart from hence, speedily, since thou art pollution unto our house, a spot of leprosy unto our walls. I enjoin thee no penance, since thy very lusts and crimes will at last be heavier than aught which I could impose; therefore, begone, and, if thou canst, repent thee and amend!"

Hereupon the Lance-man was put forth, yet as he went out, methought even he was somewhat abashed by the solemn speech of the Abbot, since he said "A plague upon the knaves who have stirred up this coil! and a mischief be upon you, too, for disturbing my conscience which was quiet enow before!" and so he departed from the chamber.

"Having purified our dwelling of one evil-doer," the Abbot again began, looking at me with much contumely and anger, "it now remaineth that we proceed with fitting rigour towards another; towards him, who, like the worst of night-robbers, hath broken into the Lord's heritage in the hours of darkness."

At these words mine anger rose quickly, and my spirit kindled at the indignity cast upon me, so that, had mine hands been free, I know not what outrage I might have committed; but my limbs being now under close restraint, I could only reply unto him in a haughty tone, "Lord Abbot, I pray you to forbear this speech, seeing that, albeit you may not know me, I am yet of noble birth, and therefore it befits neither myself to hear, nor you to utter any such scorn."

The Abbot was not slow in his answer hereunto, saying, in a scoffing voice, "Marry, one might well deem that some ale-wife or host had been full bounteous of their store unto thee, which hath called forth these strange dreams of greatness in thy bemused brain; seeming, as thou dost, to be little better than a beggar."

"Beggar!" repeated I then, with wondrous indignation, "mark me, Sir Priest, that name belongs not unto me, so truly as it doth unto yourself, and your hosts of idle monks and cowled compeers; albeit ye feed richly, lie softly, and go flaunting in the gayest robes vanity can devise for ye. I repeat unto ye, once more, that I am of the noblest blood of this nation; though now, by stress of circumstance, I am subject unto thy power and reviling taunts,—yet am I still neither inferior, nor even equal, of thine, in all the pomp and pride which thou canst call around thee."

"An boldness in evil might make thee great," returned the Abbot therewith, "truly thou wouldest be

of high degree; but I now bethink me, that the caitiff who is gone affirmed that thou wert no other than the issue of the murtherous Richard, Duke of Gloucester, and this, perchance, is thy boasted greatness."

"He spake the sooth for once," answered I with lofty voice, "for I am indeed the son of the noble King Richard, and a Plantagenet!"

"I well deem," replied the Abbot, "that thou art little better than another mean adventurer from Burgundy; but, whether thy speech be false or true, methinks thy wit must be at a low ebb to hope that this name would advance thee unto aught but a scaffold. For if thou wert indeed the offspring of Richard, what couldest thou be but his unlawful issue, and son to a murtherer slain for his tyranny and crimes? Thy lofty birth, therefore, will do thee but small good here; though, being faithfully reported, it may be of some slight import unto King Henry."

"Then unto him be it told," answered I, with scorn, "I fear not to die, or to add my blood unto that of the many victims whom he hath already cut off from my noble House; and he will find me full worthy of the name of Plantagenet. My form he may indeed reduce unto a bloody corse upon the scaffold, but upon the soul that animates it hath he no power; since it's native dignity shall never be abated, even when I bow me unto the axe of the headsman."

"That triumph may indeed be thine," rejoined the

Abbot, in a scoffing tone, "and as thou claimest such high dignity, thou shalt have fitting honour paid thee, in a larger guard and a different lodging than I did at first purpose for thee. On the word of an Abbot thy royalty shall be carried unto a palace, and I will give thee a brave retinue to wait around thy noble person, until thou art safely bestowed at Sheen; or, perchance, until thou shalt lack a guard no longer."

At this moment I well might understand the great hazard of my condition, never doubting that my life was indeed forfeited; for I had, peradventure, been too rash in avowing my birth and noble blood. Yet, nevertheless, the thought that I was not the base person they deemed me, and the consciousness of mine own good faith in entering the Abbey, I felt would sustain me under any violence; and I looked steadily forward unto mine only remaining duty, namely, to die like the son of a King.

In the meantime the Abbot had summoned his Yeomen to arm themselves, mount, and carry me on to the Palace of Sheen, where the Court was to be at the Feast of Easter; and we set out forthwith, notwithstanding the lateness of the hour. The skies were now full dark, though the storm was over; and, after riding hard through the night, by about the hour of *Prime* we arrived at that most stately abode for royalty, which Harry Tudor had then lately erected, and called Richmond after his own title.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CAPTIVE'S STORY OF HIS IMPRISONMENT.

Because by birth to Kings allied,—
Ah me! how cruel the pretence!
My name offends the ear of pride,
My being born is mine offence.

* * * *

And who can tell the pangs so keen
That such ill-fated lovers know?
Where towers and bars arise between,
Dark spies above and guards below.

In vain for me the sun doth rise,
In vain for me the moon doth shine,
The smiling earth ne'er cheers mine eyes,
Here doom'd in misery to pine.

MICKLE'S BALLAD OF ARABELLA STUART.

WHEN the Abbot's Yeomen and myself arrived at Sheen, I was bestowed in a strong upper chamber in one of the towers of that fair Palace; in the which captivity I had space of time enow to think over my past fortunes, for with the future I deemed that I had now little or nothing to do.

Yet even in that place of mine imprisonment, I learned some things concerning the fatal night whereof

I have recounted the story, and that cleared up certain of the dark passages of my life. It would have been no marvel had my soul been overcome with heaviness at the hazard wherein I was now placed, yet did I feel less for myself than for the Lady Bride, whom I ever regarded as sacrificed unto Harry Tudor's jealousy of the House of York, even from her very youth, albeit she was so well fitted for the veil and the cloister. It was told unto me by my rude, though friendly, Keeper, that after my departure to Sheen, she was full sternly reproved and dealt with for my sake; for albeit I only was guilty herein, yet would none believe that I had ventured unto her of mine own will alone: therefore did she endure a twofold mistrust, being thought both to have invited my trespass, and after perversely to have denied it. Hereupon full soon was the royal Damsel withdrawn from Bermondsey, not even staying her purposed Consecration, and conveyed unto a remote Convent, the name whereof was carefully hidden from my knowledge; and I did fear that still more rigorous dealings were used towards her, since, I should have noted, that Henry deemed him now to have small tie unto her House, seeing that her sister, the Queen Elizabeth, had deceased on the 11th day of February in the year 1503. The thought of her sorrow, made yet more gloomy the sad season which I passed imprisoned at Sheen; for albeit I was in a full stately palace, the narrow chamber where I was confined was heavily barred and bolted, and little better

for it's lonely habitant, than the murky dungeon of a common gaol.

It was long before the Council came together at this place, for that Henry and his Ministers were taken up with devising, how best to strengthen his throne against any sudden motion in favour of the House of York, which many in the realm still affected; and they feared, moreover, that, as in truth his best claim unto the crown was through his late Queen, some of the nation should think that he could hold it only in trust for his young heir. Harry Tudor had also a scheme afoot for a new marriage with the Queen-Dowager of Naples, because of the great riches which her late lord had willed unto her; but when the secret English Commissioners learned that she should inherit no such wealth, they were recalled, and their master thought of this device no longer.

About the Feast of Easter, the Privy-Council all met at Sheen, whither Harry himself had already come in great pomp, but, as I beheld his followers unto the Palace from my lofty and well-defended window, I should rather have said in *great fear;* else why was that guard around him of tall and mounted Yeomen, clad in his liveries of red and blue, half being armed with bows and arrows and the other half with harquebusses, and all wearing armour with great swords? The like hereof had never been seen in England, until Harry established them in fear at his Coronation, and had never disbanded them: but it

was not thus I trow in the days of King Richard, and for why? because he trusted unto his own valour and the good faith of his subjects; which this usurping Earl, this wily, but "shallow Richmond," as my father would sportively call him, could never do. Now, indeed, I wot that these Yeomen are continued as the proper retinue of state, so men do nothing note them; yet, albeit I had seen the French King's band of Scots Archers, it did somewhat surprise me to find that a Sovereign of these realms could not travel in safety, unless he were surrounded by this guard of mercenaries.

When that I was at length brought before the Council, I was full closely questioned upon all points; as well those affecting mine adventure at Bermondsey, as those regarding mine own lineage and quality. But as I was now no longer under the wild rule of sudden passion, I deemed it might be anything save wisdom to insist on mine high estate and royal blood; yet from love unto truth I might not unsay what I had already declared, the which was not slightly noted by the Council, and methought I was the more harshly dealt with, because I had too openly avowed myself the issue of one who had worn England's crown: but, peradventure, this was only a phantasy of mine own. Howbeit, as none of the charges against me did seem to amount unto treason or to touch my life, the wily Harry was minded rather to court unto his interest such of the House of York and it's favourers as were yet remaining. He himself averred, that he sought

not the death of obscure foes or silly and misled souls, but used his rigour only to bring low and abate, the high stomachs of such wild people as were bred up in seditious factions and civil rebellions. Whereupon it seemed, from mine after-fate, as if himself and his Council had resolved rather to suppress all knowledge of me and let me slide out of memory, than presently to persecute me; for I was ordered to be removed for a brief space until other witnesses should be sought for, and other proofs brought up against me, when, peradventure, it was alway intended to keep me an unknown captive, like my cousin Edward Plantagenet, and upon fitting occasion to put me to death.

When I did thus appear before Henry in his Council, I looked upon him for the last time, and I had not beheld him afore, since the fatal day when I wandered up to his guard in the battle of Bosworth-field; for I saw him not at his Queen's coronation. And, now, there was, in truth, a great and sad alteration in him: for whereas he was noted of all to have a fair complexion, and a countenance merry and smiling, methought his visage looked pale and thin, and so worn by care and pain, that I could not but pity him. His eyes were already dim of sight, and the pangs of that mistaken disease, in the fierce agonies whereof he departed,—had even at this time come upon him, and marked him with the furrows of a too-early old age.

From the chamber of Council I was forthwith returned unto my prison-room, where he who had me

in keeping, one Walter Bolte, admonished me to be of good courage, seeing that it had fared no worse with me; for he said, had not the King been gracious, or matters shewed somewhat in my favour, I had never returned with such respite. The manner of this fellow was blunt but kindly, and though I deemed it not altogether fitting for one of my sort to hold much converse with a person of his degree, yet did I not scruple to do so at this time; and I thereupon demanded of him, wherefore he augured so favourably of my condition.

"Truly," answered he, "because it hath full rarely chanced, that they who have not had money to make large fine unto his Grace for the weal of his people, have been retained for any second hearing before the Council; and I shrewdly guess that your purse is not deep enow to buy such delay."

"Small profit," rejoined I, "is likely to arise from that delay unto me, if my second trial, as you term it, should be no better than the first: it may, perchance, somewhat put off the hour of my fall, but I trow well that 'twill scarcely prevent it."

"Nay," replied Walter, thereupon, "and 'twere unreason to hope for it, so I prithee deem not that I would so mislead you, as to cause you to think that your life may be saved; I meant but to shew that you should take comfort in this pause."

"Alas!" did I exclaim then, as if speaking unto myself, "my fate is but as I weened it must be; and at all events I must be deprived of life."

"Yea, even so," responded the Gaoler, "as I judge."

"Why, then," demanded I, "would you give me such false comfort, and wherefore do you deem that I have cause for rejoicing, inasmuch the Council hath not yet condemned me?"

"Why, in chief," answered Walter, "because it looked unto me that you are in much favour in having space to make up your peace with Heaven, which hath not oft been granted I promise you;—and then, because I thought even your death might be made somewhat more supportable than the same hath been in many other cases; the which I can overname for your edification and comfort, an you list to hear them."

"But, notwithstanding all," returned I thereunto, "you still tell me that I must certainly die."

"Aye, truly," added Walter, as if in surprise at my speech, "that did I ever think must be the end of all; nor doubted that you would do the like. For, to say nought of your sacrilege, you could little expect that the avowed son of the evil Duke of Gloucester would be let live when so many mock princes have been disturbing the realm by their lawless uprisings."

"Then in Heaven's name! thou quibbling knave," questioned I, "what was the goodly abatement of penalty you held out to me, wherein you deemed I stood so fair, and whence I might hope so much?"

"Good words, Master Plantagenet," responded the wearisome Keeper, "good words, and I care not if I tell you that too. And so you may first note, if, in-

deed you know it not already, that to die is what none 'scape, it being every man's lot; *argal*, the evil or sorrow, of death, in one condemned thereunto for his misdoings, ariseth not from taking of his life, but from the sad array and doleful circumstance of execution: perceive ye me herein? Now, since your matters have taken so fair a turn, it may be that the King in his great clemency,—he being convinced that you are in truth of royal blood,—may put you to death in the pleasant manner that one of your House was by King Edward the Fourth, as I well remember, and so drown you in a butt of good Sherris-sack!"

"And is that *all* the mercy," said I, "which I may look for at your King's hand?"

"*All!* quotha," replied the amazed Walter Bolte, "to see, now, how unthankful are some men! But Gramercy! good friend, I pray thee tell no man that I promised thee such goodly chance! I spake but of what *might* happen, an thy good luck continued; yet would I not have thee too cheerfully hope therefore."

"Truly," responded I, "'tis not coveted by me, if such be all the clemency I may look to."

"Why this is well," added Walter, "moderate desires bring fewest disappointments, and thou mightest at last look in vain for so princely and merry a death; yet still would I comfort thee with the knowledge that, at the worst, thou wilt but lose thy life by a stout cord and a high gibbet; or that, in consideration of all doubts, his Grace, ever merciful and most gentle, will

shew thee the special favour of taking thine head by a sharp axe and a sure headsman."

"Since it must be so, then," said I once more, "I trust his Grace will not refuse me the attendance of one of the good Friars from the Monastery here at Sheen, to take my confession and prepare me for death. Therefore, if you will furnish me with the means, I will eftsoons write this most reasonable request unto the Privy-Council."

"Not by mine avisement or aid, Master Plantagenet," rejoined the good Walter Bolte, as methought in some alarm, "'tis ever best to let great folks have their own way, and if the King and Council forget you, why do you forget them, and so be even. And for your soul, I warrant that you and I can guard it without ever a barefooted Friar coming hither; for when such visitors come unto my guests, I have noted that they tarry not long after with me, since the Executioner is the Confessor's henchman: so I pray you to think no more of a Friar."

Unto this wise counsel I assented, although I answered nothing thereunto, yet I saw well that he who spake meant me fairly, and believed that his discourse, rude as it was, would give me much comfort; albeit he was somewhat hardened by his office of gaoler, and had learned to think full lightly of death upon the scaffold, and even to speak of it with a leer and a jest. But, sooth to say, I was ever ill-prepared to welcome such consolation; for though I would have braved Death in the

field, or have assayed to meet him calmly in the chamber, I did nevertheless shrink from encountering him like a guilty miscreant.

And such was the ordinary course of my Keeper's converse during mine imprisonment at Sheen; for, like many persons of his condition, he was ever most ready to recognise the royal grace and forbearance, when it was shewn in the fashion I have here recounted. Howbeit, his wonder did much increase, when all that year passed away and I still remained unpersecuted, and even unnoted, by Henry and his Council, saving that they yet held me a close prisoner. Farther than this, also, the year 1506 came on, and, peradventure, would, unto me, have glided away like the foregoing, in sad captivity and that deferred hope which maketh the heart sick,—when, in the very beginning thereof, a strange release was wondrously provided for me, and was quicker in approach than I could either have hoped or trusted.

It was, then, in the night-season of Monday, the fifth day of January, whilst the bell for *Lauds* was sounding forth from the Convent of Observant-Friars adjoining unto the Palace, that, on a sudden, the slow and heavy toll was changed into a loud and hurried note of alarm; and the stillness of that silent spot was broken by loud and repeated shouts of "Fire in the King's lodgings!"* Full narrow was the

* Some notice of this fire is recorded in Stow's Chronicle.

space from the lofty window of my chamber, yet as I watched at it, I did at length behold how the devouring element came fiercely on, triumphing over state-chamber and gallery, as they were spread out both above and beneath the turret wherein I was prisoned, whereunto it was full quickly approaching. At length the blaze from beneath mounted upwards unto my window, and was borne inward by the night-blast with divers pieces of burning timber; the like being also cast upon the roof of my tower, which I deemed would forthwith set fire unto the rafters thereof: for it seemed to have been ordained that the Last of the Plantagenets should have somewhat of a royal death, by perishing in the flames of a burning Palace!

The great and sudden hazard wherein this mischance placed me, caused me to call loudly upon my Keeper, who lodged in a chamber adjoining unto mine own; but no answer came, even though I repeated my call still more loudly. I then shook my door, and, much to mine amaze, found it unfastened; whereupon, passing into the Keeper's room, I saw that it was empty and the door thereof left open, as if he had hastily quitted it. Well I ween, that the desire of escape and the hope of liberty did now glance full brightly over my mind, but anon I thought upon the many doubts attending the same; as finding my way unchallenged through the winding passages and many chambers of the Palace, and then of avoiding pursuit either by land or water, the which seemed

unto me almost impossible. Howbeit, I resolved at all hazards to make the essay, and, musing on my course, passed through a portal in my prison-turret, which suddenly brought me upon certain leads above the chambers that were on fire. Whilst I was searching around me for another way from that place, much doubting how to proceed, I felt one forcibly grasp mine arm, and say, in a low and rude voice, "Hah! this is well, Master Plantagenet, we meet in good hour for both of us; though, perchance, somewhat inopportunely in stopping your course hence."

"Had my Keeper been in his own place," was mine answer, "I had not been here, and even now I left not my chamber until 'twas too hot to lodge longer in, as you may behold, nor until I had more than once vainly summoned the Gaoler. The door opened beneath my grasp as I shook it, I wandered here,——"

"And would eftsoons have strayed out yonder," interrupted the Soldier, whom I saw by the light of the flames to be no other than the fierce and fraudful Bernard Schalken, looking upon me with a visage of much scoffing and violence; "howbeit, 'tis not unto me that thou must answer for thy purposed escape. Nay, farther, only reply straightly and truly to that which I demand, and I will aid thee far better than thou canst aid thyself. But mark me, this is our last meeting, I owe you now a shrewd turn for making me known at Bermondsey, and, by the Maker of us both, I

will now have either my will of thee or my revenge!"

"Thy revenge!" exclaimed I in a fearless voice, "and for what? since in nought was I ever thine enemy, albeit thou hast proved thyself to be such both unto me and many others, being altogether void of good faith. But deem me not still a stripling, Bernard Schalken, I fear thee not; and neither thy will nor thy revenge,—aiding mine escape, nor ensuring my present death, shall cause me to do aught of dishonour to secure or to avoid them."

"Think better of it, comrade," thereunto answered Bernard in a scoffing and malicious voice, "and 'twill be for your most 'vantage, I promise thee. But to be as bold and brief as thyself, thus stands my desire. In the reign of thy father I was a soldier in his guard, and after became the follower of Sir James Tyrrell and Sir Gilbert De Mountford, as you wot. How they employed me, 'tis now no time to repeat, and it skills not for thee to know; but the haughty Lord Lovel was then in the height of his pride and power: he loved to check and overbear the soldiers for little cause, and once, in the wars, upon some slight matter of spoil which I had seized on, he called me 'coward plunderer,' and struck me unto the ground! I swore at fitting season to wash this out with his blood, for he was no leader of mine; but then came the fight at Bosworth, which scattered the York host, and he betook him unto France. When he again came hither with Lambert Simnell, I was a soldier under King

Henry, but in the battle of Stoke my station was against the power of Martin Schwartz, and I missed Lovel by his flight across the Trent. Had I but known of his retreat there, he should have died, had he owned a thousand lives; but I well deemed he was drowned, as others did, until Israel was taken secretly wandering about Minster-Lovel and baffled all questions and tortures to get from him the name and retreat of the fugitive. Then didst thou suddenly appear in the state-chamber, which assured me that one was in hiding there, and that it was Lovel himself!"

"Thanks to St. Mary!" responded I then, "I 'scaped from your power by an open window and a swift foot, albeit I was only a stripling. But bethink you, ill-minded man, that eighteen years have passed since that hour; and had Lord Lovel been indeed hidden there, he must long since have been but lifeless dust."

"That may well be," replied the fierce Bernard, "yet his very dust is to me so hateful, that it would joy me to wreak my vowed vengeance even upon that; and to spurn the proud noble as he did the oppressed soldier; beside claiming the reward which is still offered for him alive or dead. And now, Plantagenet, look at that flaming gulf beneath thee, and bethink thee of the fearful death which it offers. Consent to guide me unto the haughty Lovel's retreat or sepulchre, I care not which, and, by all that men call holy or

adore, I will set thee free from prison! Refuse me this, and, by the Powers of Darkness! I will forthwith hurl thee from the battlements!—Nay, think not to call upon thy Keeper, for all in the Palace are too intent on saving body and goods to hear thee: and should thy corse be found, King Henry will reck but little so thou art dead; whilst all will deem thou hast but fallen over in seeking to escape. Once more, then, make thy decision."

"Never," then exclaimed I firmly, "will I take my life on such degrading terms, even though the headsman's axe fell as I spake the word! And never will I disclose the pious Lord Lovel's holy place of rest unto one, who goeth with fiendish malice to feast upon the dead!"

"Then presently commit thy soul to God!" answered Bernard, thereupon seizing me with a mighty grasp, and fixing one foot half over the edge of the battlements. I now also put forth my strength to resist him, and, albeit I shuddered at the very thought of giving him unto the fearful death whereto he had doomed me, yet did I struggle to get free from him. We grappled, therefore, together for some short space, but whilst he was straining his huge frame to raise me unto the battlements, and stoutly I bent me backwards therefrom, certain of the stones trembled and gave way beneath his feet, mine own garment rent at the same moment, and, loosing his hold, he reeled over with a mighty fall into the flaming gallery!

Heartsick and full of horror at this evil end of a most evil Soldier, I seemed to lose all sense of mine own condition, and all desire of making mine escape; whereupon I wandered back again unto the outer chamber, enwrapped in solemn thought, and there awaited the return of my Keeper, regardless of all danger around me. The fire was quenched towards morning, when Walter Bolte came back, and once more made me close prisoner, saying that my lodgings were in no hazard from the flames. About noon-tide he did again return unto me, with a Soldier bearing a sharp and heavy sword, such as headsmen are sometimes wont to use upon the scaffold. The sound of their approach brake up my musings, and, on beholding them, strange thoughts came over my mind; since I deemed that mine attempted escape had been discovered, and that in the Soldier I beheld mine executioner. For I had heard of Kings who held it not unlawful, secretly to murther such of their prisoned foes as they listed not to bring to farther trial or open destruction; and it seemed full likely that such a fate was now purposed for me. I will not deny that I felt some dread hereat; for albeit I should thus 'scape the dishonour of dying on a public scaffold, yet to be hurried from life in a moment and in prison, by the slaughtering hands of a secret minister of vengeance, seemed unto me to have a visage of yet greater horror.

The Keeper's first address unto me was to follow

him quickly, and hold silence in all I did, whilst he farther ordered the Soldier with the heavy sword to close up behind me; and, from the blunt and dark manner of his speech and action, I felt me assured that I was going forthwith unto my death: whereupon I advanced slowly, at the same time demanding of him whither I was about to go.

"What matter can that be of thine?" answered he, with his wonted jest, "come away and keep not thy betters waiting; dost thou fear being set at liberty by following me?"

"No friend," replied I, "in truth; but last night's fire had nearly done that for me without any other aid."

"Yea," responded the Keeper, "there speakest thou full shrewdly; and because the King's lodging is burned, with rare beds, 'broidered carpets, velvet curtains, and royal furniture, beside much of the Palace, and certain soldiers,—as thou art one of his Highness's most precious things in this place, he hath resolved to send thee out of farther hazard to be kept with his other jewels in the Tower. And so follow me forth, and keep silence the whilst.—But hold thee, Master," —continued Walter Bolte, suddenly stopping in his course,—"as you may be noted in your own clothes, I am willed to see you vested in this Friar's habit, wherein you must make the journey."

Therewith he produced the gown and cowl of a Benedictine Monk, the which I put on, half lament-

ing within myself that it had not been my fortune always to wear the like; and so, relieved from the thought of instant execution, I followed my conductor: not because I was well content to do so, but because I thought that my present lot could be but little worsted, saving by death; and I also saw that if such were indeed intended, I could in no wise fly therefrom but must perforce yield unto it.

The Keeper and certain guards then led me down unto the river-side, and entered with me into a barge with two watermen; whereupon we launched away on the broad river of Thames, and drew nigh unto the ancient Bridge of London when a misty even was spreading it's thickest mantle over land and water. I deemed myself now as one condemned, in being thus sent unto the Tower; with which sad thought, the horrible remembrance of Bernard's death was ever present unto my mind, and, thus disquieted, I had taken little note of our near approach unto my dreaded harbour, or of the voyage thither. Whether it were by reason of the fore-named darkness, or the false and flitting lights dimly seen through it, in divers chambers of the houses which do overhang that wondrous Bridge, or from misgovernance of our vessel,—I know not; but when it entered that current which rushes with such loud noise and mighty speed through the arches, our barge was dashed against the oaken piles thereof with sudden and fearful fury, and whelmed in an instant, casting those on board into the river. The forms of all my

companions were speedily lost unto me in the thick darkness of that evening, and their cries in the roaring and pouring of the wild surges, which carried along the shattered boat and hapless crew at fiercest speed down the tide, and I wot they were never more beheld of man!

For mine own part, I silently resigned my soul unto God, who could still hear me amidst the loudest clamour of the waters; but as I was hurried through the narrow arch, my course was full suddenly and wondrously stopped, by mine habit catching against some iron in the starling. I clung fast thereunto, and, at length, mounted upon it, remaining there until certain cords were let down from the Bridge above to aid mine escape thence; and when I learned that there was now no other than myself to save, I gave hearty thanks to Heaven for mine own preservation, and deemed that I once more beheld future liberty, arising out of that which seemed no other than present and certain death.

CHAPTER XXI.

A SECOND EXILE, AND AN INVITATION AND RETREAT INTO SANCTUARY.

Adieu! Adieu! my native shore
  Fades o'er the waters blue;
The night-winds sigh, the breakers roar,
  And shrieks the wild sea-mew.
Yon sun that sets upon the sea
  We follow in his flight;
Farewell awhile to him and thee,
  My Native Land—Good Night!

LORD BYRON.

—— They appointed an eloquent and learned Friar to preach a Sermon of Contempt of the World, and of the happiness and benefit of a quiet and contemplative life; which the Friar did most affectionately. After which Sermon, the Emperor took occasion to declare openly, that the Preacher had begotten in him a resolution to lay down his dignities, forsake the world, and betake himself to a monastic life.

IZAAK WALTON'S LIFE OF GEORGE HERBERT.

ALBEIT I had been thus most wondrously protected from the fearful chances of dying by long imprisonment, fire, water, or the hand of the executioner, and thus seemed to be again at liberty, I did still know well, that, whilst Harry Tudor lived, my life was not yet safe in this realm; but that I must speedily haste me beyond the seas, though I wist not how to

do it, having but little money to carry me hence. As all my companions were drowned when the barge was overwhelmed in the wild current, and as I had cast from me my Friar's habit when I got me on the starling,—that, being afterward found, it might be truly thought that I had met the like fate,—I might thus give what report I would of myself, so that truth were not too greatly outraged in seeking for safety. Therefore I recounted how that I had lain long space at Sheen, confined by an evil distemper, and that I was now coming thence in hope of entertainment either abroad or on the seas, with a certain company, when our boatmen, through misgovernance of the vessel or darkness of the night, dashed it against the Bridge, as it was already known.

The dwelling whereto they who drew me up led me to dry my raiment, I soon quitted with thanks, and forthwith wandered unto an Inn near the Bridge, much frequented by shipmen, of the sign of the Great Henry; in memory of the vast ship of war so called, built for Harry Tudor, and the first royal barque of that kind which did ever float out of an English harbour. At this place, therefore, did I find divers mariners met together, discoursing on their voyage unto Bristol, the which they should begin with the tide that would presently flow, whence they were forthwith to sail in search of new countries. I did soon find that they were the Captain, and some of the company, of the good ship *Dominus Vobiscum*, belonging unto Hugh

Eliot and Thomas Ashurst, Merchants of Bristol, and Johannes and Gonzales Fernandez, Portuguese, unto whom a patent had been granted for making discoveries upon the seas.* Upon hearing that I was looking for entertainment, the Captain, one Luigi Ramusio, who was also a Portingale, demanded if I would take service with them to see unknown lands for some three years or so, upon fair terms; adding withal, that I should forthwith declare mine intent, for that the tide was fast making, the wind blew fairly for sailing, and that his barque, which lay beside the Bridge, was even then ready to depart.

It may be well thought that I desired nothing better than such an offer, and that it was soon a stricken bargain betwixt us; for as to mine own land, it had once more become my fiercest enemy, and the Lady Bride was now lost unto me past all hope of recovery, or even of beholding again. Moreover, my strength was decayed and my soul had become full sad from long imprisonment, beside being dismayed and affrighted at the late fearful deaths of Bernard Schalken, my Keeper, and the guards; and I did earnestly hope to lose the thought of these things in distant climes, wherein I might also look to gain new life, and, above all, liberty.

I do not question, but that they who shall hereafter

* This instrument is printed in Rymer's Fœdera, vol. xiii. p. 37, and is dated December 9th, 1502.

read over this my story, will picture unto themselves, and that without my shewing, the doubts and fears which I did endure, even after we got unto Bristol, until our barque was made ready for sea; lest, peradventure, I might be heard of, traced thither, and so carried back unto the Tower, where, in brief space, I should no doubt have lost mine head. Howbeit, as God would have it, my death was deemed certain, and as I presently altered my garb and figure to look as much as I might like a shipman, and kept me close unto my vessel, I 'scaped questioning until our barque was all appointed for sailing. This was some time about the end of March; and so, having all confessed and received the Sacrament by command of our Captain, we did at length set our courses unto sea and depart. It were full vain to think of shewing in this place, the great and wondrous histories of our voyages; both because they be all too long to write herein, and also because that divers, of great skill in the Mariner's Art, have penned most excellent accounts thereof, what time the brave Christopher Columbus and Sebastian Cabot went unto the same parts as we. I will, therefore, note only, that in my several voyages I saw many strange things and countries, in going unto the East and West Indies, into the South Seas, and round by the coasts on the North side of America, for discovering of new lands, or finding out a North-West passage thereunto. We sailed, moreover, through the great North Seas, wherein we saw the mighty Morses,

which be killed with great hazard for their oil; and even in the month of hot July, met with monstrous hills of ice swimming on the waves; and beheld a land, which, at this season, hath, as it were, all daylight.

And such was mine employ until the year of Grace 1509, when we were returning with good success from a voyage round by the East Sea, or Sound of Denmark; and drew fairly nigh unto the coast of England, where the Northern Ocean washes the shores of Norfolk, it being our purpose to enter the river and harbour of Wells. The even ere we should have reached thereunto, was fair and pleasant, though, as divers of us thought, not without tokens of storm; yet were the shipmen full glad, and spent the time in merriment, even as the swan singeth before his death, not watching that most deceitful coast. Anon the wind arose, and blew vehemently from the North-at-East, bringing withal rain and thick mist, so that we might not discern land, to put in right with the haven, nor see a cable's length before us through the night. In the morning we found ourselves on flats and shifting sands, whereupon we let the ship drive unto the wind; but, beating up and down, sometimes in shallows, and sometimes in deep water, our barque at last struck a-ground, and soon after had her stern-parts all beaten in pieces! – It was a most heavy and grievous damage, thus to lose, as it were at one blow, our tall ship, freighted with great provision, gathered with much care, long time, and difficulty, and spe-

cially the loss of our men to the number of almost an hundred souls. Of this our crew, there was no one who looked more resolvedly unto death than did the Captain, for when all hope was past, of recovering the ship, and men began to give over and save themselves, he would not consent to fly therefrom, but betook him unto the highest deck, and I placed myself beside him, where we both commended ourselves unto God! How long he lived after I know not, for the rushing sea soon made all level; and, thereby bereft of my senses, I floated unto the shore of Wells upon a broken piece of the vessel.

After this most hapless manner did I again get me unto my native England, where divers dwellers upon the coast received us with much charity. I learned, moreover, what were unto me good tidings, namely, that Henry of Lancaster had died some three months past; before which, in the pangs of death, he had heavily bethought him of his sins, and did what he might to blot them out by alms, prayers, and many bitter tears, as well as some endeavour at restitution unto such as he had oppressed. In especial, he passed a full remission towards all who were in any jeopardy from his laws, for things formerly done, the which made me again safe in England, even should any remember me; but I wot well that every year was now making great change in my visage, beside that it was also much altered by my travels in distant countries. The realm was at this time rejoicing in having ex-

changed the gloomy and rigorous sway of the first Harry Tudor, for the stately and merry governance of his young and lusty son, now called King Henry VIII.; who was a Prince of good person, and much given to costly disports and pageants, albeit he was fairly read and wondrous subtle in school-divinity. Howbeit, in my mind all was now a sad and dreary waste; for that I was bereft of every friend or companion, and stood, as it were, alone in a merry world: yet, even in that most mournful hour, was I upheld by the merciful Providence of God; for He, without whose will not even a sparrow falleth, kept me from despair, and had already provided a retreat for my wearied body, and consolation for my sorrowful heart.

Having now received such aid as the poor inhabitants of Wells were able to bestow upon us, I wandered alone, and in gloomy mood, some five miles farther towards the Town of Walsingham, it now being Sunday, the 22nd of July, and the Feast of St. Mary Magdalene, about one of the clock after noon; what time the Abbey-bell had left calling together the people, to hear a sermon out of the Word of God. It is all but too seldom that men be found to crowd together unto such holy exhortations, but now there were full many gathered in the nave of St. Mary's Church, to hear a certain Friar preach from the stone pulpit which yet standeth in the great Western window. Yet of this congregation, there were divers who came and ordered them in that most irreverent wise, which

I remember me was once full common in the Churches of this realm. For some would come to shew their gay attire, and, therefore, strutted up and down even whiles the holy service was being said; others would meet in the porches, during Matins, and babble of law-pleadings and causes, bargains, and the like; and another sort would bring with them their sparhawks and falcons, or dogs in lines and leashes: so that the whole Church and the more pious sort therein, would be all disquieted with the barking of the hounds, ringing of the hawks' bells and chains, and fluttering of their wings; beside the clatter of such as were wont to wander about before the altars in their slippers, and most persons did ever wear their bonnets.*

The Friar who was now to preach, was called Brother Chrysostom, because of his sweet and holy eloquence, which brought much people to hear him; and it was told me that on this day he was to discourse of the life and pious retirement of St. Mary Magdalene, and of Contempt of the World. He was an aged man at the time whereof I write, and is now gone unto his rest and his reward, before evil days came upon his House: but, as divers of his Sermons were long kept in the Library-room of Walsingham Abbey,

* These highly irreverent customs in Churches, are also described in a very curious and interesting manner in Alexander Barclay's Ship of Fools.

I can yet set down a part of that which I did now hear.

The pious Monk first told us of the history of St. Mary Magdalene, as collected out of divers good and ancient authors; shewing her lineage and honourable birth of Syrus and Eucaria at Hierusalem; her dwelling at the Castle of Magdalene nigh unto Naim City, whence she took her surname; her life of sin, until her sister Martha persuaded her to go and hear one of the sermons of Our Saviour Christ; and her sudden and mighty conversion, by the wondrous words of Him who spake as never man spake. Then did he recount how she shewed her repentance by anointing His feet, in the House of Simon the Pharisee; how she did thereupon receive the remission of all her sins, both *à pœnâ et à culpâ*, from the guilt and the penance: how she ever after desired to be much at the feet of Christ, never looking any other man in the face; and how, after His Passion, she some time dwelt with the Virgin Mary. Moreover he instructed us, how some authors have written that, when the Gentiles persecuted the Christians, Mary Magdalene, her sister Martha, and their brother Lazarus, with Maximianus the disciple, and Gelidonius the blind man whom Christ had healed with clay put upon his eyes, Marcella, the hand-maiden of Martha, and many others of the true Faith, were put into an old barque, without oars or sails, and so launched forth to sea that they might be drowned. Howbeit, by the aid of God,

they arrived safely at Marseilles in France, and converted all that Province unto Christ; St. Lazarus being made Bishop of that City, and Maximianus Bishop of another called Aquius. For St. Mary Magdalene, she also converted many souls unto God, and then retired herself unto a cave in the deserts, where she led a solitary life for some thirty years, her food being herbs and roots; and in that place would she oft-times hear celestial harmony, being lifted up by angels seven times in the day and night, two cubits from the ground.

The good Monk had failed not, throughout all his Discourse, to shew us that, as these things were written for our instruction, there belonged unto them a mystical signification as well as a natural one; and when he arrived at the retirement of St. Mary into the deserts, he said as followeth.—"My dear Brethren, I come now to shew unto you the benefits of a holy retreat from the world, and an intercourse with God. He who standeth upon a high and steadfast rock in the raging tempest, may look out unto the stormy sea and yet fear nothing of the strife of the wild waters whereon he gazeth. And herein I would have you to note, the safe and happy condition of such as have fled from the world, and are retreated unto, and resting upon, the Rock Christ; with the pity with which they can look abroad upon the fierce turmoils around them. We know that this life is a life of pain and labour, wherefore it is that rest and refection be so

sweet unto men. But what, I pray you, is the rest or the refection of this world, when compared with that which Our Lord offereth in Himself in the Gospel? when He saith, '*Venite ad me, omnes qui laboratis et onerati estis, et Ego reficiam vos,*' Come unto Me, all who do labour, and ye that be heavily laden, and I will refresh you. And this is nothing else than coming out of the world into His Church or service; because whilst we be engaged with the world, we cannot enjoy the sweetness of an holy life, nor cast from us the cares under which we labour, nor the sins wherewith we be so heavily laden.

"And now, my dear Brethren, I do earnestly exhort and invite you all, to set as lightly by this world as you may, to the end that at last you may entirely quit it without sorrow. But for such of you as have few, or no ties, to hold you unto it; who have found in it nought but disappointments, enemies, and persecutions, whereof ye may well be weary; or have committed in it nought but sins, wherewith ye are indeed heavily laden;—you do I charge at once to come out of it, unto the blessed rest and refection of Christ in solitude, where you shall be freed from all your sorrows. And think not that you give up any thing herein; since the life whereto I invite you is full of peace and heavenly rest. The holy St. Austin saith, in his book of Confessions, 'Oh! you who doat on this world, for what victory do you fight? your hopes can be crowned with no greater guerdon than

the world, and what is that but a brittle thing full of dangers, wherein we travel from lesser unto greater perils? so let all it's vain, light, momentary, glory perish with it, and let us be conversant with more eternal things.' And to effect this, there is no course like retirement, whereof the good Abbot Gersenus sheweth the benefits, in his first book of the Imitation of Our Lord, when he saith what spiritual excellence belonged unto the Holy Fathers of old, who became aliens unto the world, but the adopted sons and intimate friends of God. They resigned riches, dignities, honours, friends, and kindred, desiring to have neither right nor part in worldly matters, leading their rigorous and solitary lives in the deserts; where, albeit they laboured hard, prayed and fasted much, rested little, and had many fierce conflicts with the Enemy himself, they did yet enjoy spiritual repose, refection, and triumph. But we invite you not unto such trials as these, which, perchance men may not now endure. We call you not unto the haunted ruins of St. Anthony, the broken pillar of St. Simon, the sea-beaten cavern of St. Regulus, the desert-den of St. Hierome, the open wilderness of the Baptist, or the shelterless estate of Our Lord Himself, seeing that divers fair dwellings be now edified for such as list to live an holy retired life, and give themselves unto God, after their example, shewing as it were unto Heaven an easier and more excellent way.

"Come then, my dear unfortunate and penitent Brethren, quit the world, enter into this holy rest, embrace at once this life of perfection, and so cast away both your sins and your sorrows. As the holy St. Chrysostom saith in his Epistles, 'Contemn riches, and thus shalt thou be rich; contemn glory, and thou shalt be glorious; contemn injuries, and thou shalt be a conqueror; contemn rest, and thou shalt find repose; contemn earth,—and thou shalt gain Heaven!'"

Thus ended the Sermon of Brother Chrysostom, whereupon his hearers hastily crowded out of the Church, much praising his passing sweet discourse; albeit, peradventure, none purposed to amend his life thereby, or to leave the delights of the world that he might give himself unto prayer, meditation, and solitude. But, for mine own part, I still remained standing in the midst of the nave of St. Mary's Church, musing on the retirement whereof the Preacher had spoken; thinking how long since it had been embraced and enjoyed by the Lady Bride, and deeming that it was well befitting unto me in my present sad estate; the which brought tears into mine eyes, even in spite of mine endeavours to restrain them. Whilst thus absorbed in sorrow, I remembered not that those around me might be led to note, and, perchance, to scoff, at mine affliction; deeming that as I marked not who stood near me or passed me by, so I might remain unmarked of all others.

But whilst I was thus sadly musing, the voice of one behind me thus suddenly brake upon mine ear. "*Pax vobiscum,* my son; dost thou seek aught in the Abbey, or hast thou not marked that the people have departed, seeing that the holy service is ended?" Upon which salutation I turned me, and, beholding the aged Monk who had been preaching, I replied "Truly, good Father, I was so lost in contemplating your fervent invitations unto a holy retirement, with mine own sorrows and present forlorn condition, that I wist not that I stood here alone. *Vale, Pater Reverendissime,* I will forthwith retire."

But ere I might turn from him, the good Father Chrysostom laid his hand upon my garment, saying, "And wherefore weepest thou, my son? and why is thy heart thus sorrowful? bethink thee that to lament as those who have no hope, is both idle and sinful in such as are the heirs of immortal happiness; seeing that this life is but very brief, and that the unchangeable and eternal Kingdom of God is at hand."

Both the words of this speech and the voice of him who addressed me, fell with refreshing sweetness upon my woe-worn soul: like as the evening-dew falleth upon the fainting frame of him, who hath travelled over the deserts through the scorching noontide. I replied, then, by saying that, from the loss of all mine earthly friends and the overthrow of all my worldly hopes, I well knew the shortness and uncertainty of life, and that I did indeed desire to be

rid thereof and enter upon a better. But that as I must still say with holy Job, that I would await my time until my change come, so, until that hour arrived, to feel and to bemoan sorrow was only the portion of man, whatever were his future hopes: even as the bravest and stoutest barque was still tossed upon the billows, though her pilot were ever so skilful and her haven full in sight.

"Yea," answered the Monk, "that may well be, seeing that the wood and metal whereof ships be made, are alway subject unto the laws of this material world; and so must rise and sink as the waters swell and fall, and drive before the winds as they do change. But I ween that it is full different with the immortal mind of man, for that being a spark from God's own Spirit, may still rise above the created things of this visible world; whilst the hopes which Faith brings will sustain the Christian hero under all present evils, by the glorious prospect which she openeth to him of future joy."

I assented unto his kind and holy admonitions, and, as my spirit grew somewhat lightened thereby, we passed towards the cloister, having fallen into a conference which lasted some space; for the good Father Chrysostom had so won upon me with his discourse and gentle manners, that I told him such part of my sorrowful life as I best might with prudence disclose, saying, that I was the son of a great Noble who was slain at Bosworth Field. On hearing this, whilst he

censured me like some grave Saint for yielding unto despair, he wept as a man over my sufferings; adding thereunto, "Son of sorrow, as I may with truth call thee, thy woes have indeed been heavy, yet forget not the Word of the Lord which thou hast this day heard; and since thou hast been thus evil-intreated by the world, at once abandon it and forthwith hasten unto God for rest."

"And whither, good Father," demanded I, "whither shall I retreat? I trow well that the world hath small charms for me, so that I would be rid of it by any lawful means; and my most fervent hope is to devote me hereafter unto the cloister."

"If such," responded the Monk, "be in truth thy sincere and steadfast wish, on proof thereof, I would gladly give my poor aid to make thee known unto the Lord Prior of this Abbey, William Lowth, and the Brethren of Our Lady of Walsingham. So that thou mayest shelter thee at once under the covering wings of the Church; and, being so admitted, become more and more estranged from suffering and from sin. Yet let me add, good brother, that it is no small thing to dwell in monasteries blameless and free from reproach; for, as St. Anselm well noteth, 'tis not the habit or tonsure which maketh the monk, but a change of heart and a mortification of the passions. But full happy is he, as the Abbot Gersenus saith, who in this state hath passed his days in innocency and closed them with success!"

I gave him hearty thanks for his offer and admonitions, most gladly accepting of the same, telling him that I had been bred in a Benedictine Monastery, and was therefore somewhat acquainted with the rule of a conventual life; and so, after the wonted trials, was I safely entered as a Convert, and afterwards as a Canon, in the Abbey of Walsingham, by the name of Brother Richardus of Ely.

I may never forget, albeit the remains of the good Chrysostom have long since mouldered away, the spiritual consolation which God willed that I should ever find in him, but specially in his words at this time. They seemed to give unto my famished and enfeebled spirit, the succour which the Hebrews found in the manna, that was wondrously rained around their camp: whilst his example seemed unto me like a voice in the desert, or the pillars of cloud and fire, to guide me through the wilderness of this world. Before becoming a Brother of his Abbey, the desires which I had heretofore formed of a monastic life often came back unto my memory, and I saw in the interview which I have now recounted, the means of realising that holy contentment and tranquillity I had ever fondly looked unto; albeit, in the anxious troubles of my changeful life, they had been oft-times disregarded or forgotten.

Yet would I neither deny nor conceal that, even whilst thus resigning the world, some painful remembrances of my former love and dreams of greatness

hung about mine heart, whereof my fantasy would frame a full gay picture of what might have been, the which vain expectancies I had now renounced for ever. Yet had I no merit in thus yielding up mine earthly love or ambitious hopes unto Heaven, for conscience whispered unto me, that I had resigned them only when I might never hope to possess them. Howbeit, like too many who bring a seeming rich gift unto the altar, I wished, full weakly, to glorify myself for sacrificing the world unto God: yet do I now shrewdly fear that, had I ever attained unto the wild dreams of my youth, and had been united unto the Lady Bride,—neither the blessed content of a holy life, nor a Saint's golden palm or starry diadem, nor the unseen and unspeakable joys of Heaven itself,—would have led me, weak as I was, contentedly to have resigned them.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE LIFE OF A RELIGIOUS RECLUSE, AND A ROYAL PILGRIMAGE TO WALSINGHAM.

Welcome, pure thoughts! Welcome, ye silent groves!
These guests, these courts, my soul most dearly loves:—
A prayer-book now shall be my looking-glass,
In which I will adore my Maker's face.
Here dwell no hateful looks, no palace-cares,
No broken vows dwell here, nor pale-faced fears;
Then here I'll sit, and sigh my hot youth's folly,
And learn to affect an holy melancholy;
And if Contentment be a stranger,—then
I'll ne'er look for it, but in Heaven again.

SIR HENRY WOTTON.

As I went to Walsingham,
To the SHRINE with speede;
Met I with a jolly Palmér,
Clad in a Pilgrim's weede.

OLD BALLAD CITED BY BISHOP PERCY.

"FIAT PAX IN VIRTUTE TUA, ET ABUNDANTIA IN TURRIBUS TUIS!" Let Peace be within thy walls, and Prosperity within thy towers! was insculped above the chief gate of that holy Monastery which had now become mine abode. And, in good sooth, it seemed

unto me, as if I had suddenly found there the tranquillity, which the world giveth not nor takes away;—the quiet rest for which I had long been searching: since the storms and dreariness of mine heart had suddenly passed, the tempest ceased, and there was a great calm. It seemed as if the tumults of the world, could now reach me no more; and as though the wild confusion which I had once beheld therein, was but a troublous dream of the night out of which I was happily awakened. Yea, and not only awakened, but called therefrom to think upon the fairest images of celestial glory, which pointed out a Heaven hereafter, and almost gave me a revelation of the Beatific Vision, even whilst I was yet upon earth.

I will not here set down how stately and fitting a temple of God, was the far-famed Abbey of Walsingham in it's days of glory; because, all despoiled and dishonoured as it hath since been, enough of it remaineth to speak somewhat of it's wonted magnificence: and to shew that he, whom holy contemplation or calamity had weaned from the base and fleeting enjoyments of life, might not desire a fairer asylum wherein to give his last days unto devotion, repose, or sacred tranquillity.

Yet was not so rich and noted a Shrine as this, so retired from the world as to hear no reports of that which was passing abroad; because, through the frequent visitations of Pilgrims and others, many tidings of public things found their way even unto

this holy retreat, some whereof were written into our own Chronicles to keep them in memory.—Thus, we heard how the fraudful instruments of the late Harry Tudor's extortion, Sir Richard Empson and Edmund Dudley, in the year 1510, were convicted and executed as traitors; their meaner agents being killed by the people. It was told us how in 1513, the new Pope Leo X. entered into a league with King Henry against Louis XII. of France, sending unto him a barque laden with choice viands and rich wines as gifts, and indulgences and holy symbols for such as should go with him to war against that country. Anon we heard how Henry had gone upon that expedition in person, with much state, having a great power of near 15,000 men; and retaining the famous Almaine Emperor Maximilian and his host, who wore St. George's Cross, and had an hundred crowns for their daily payment. Thereafter came the Battle of Spurs, and the taking of Tournay, and then the Earl of Surrey's victory over the Scots at Floddon-field, wherein King James IV. was slain; whereupon Queen Catherine came unto Walsingham, and returned Our Lady great thanks for the same: and in 1514 we were told of a treaty of peace with France, and how Henry's younger sister, Mary, was married unto King Louis. About this time, moreover, we heard much of the sudden, yet deserved, greatness of Thomas Wolsey, an especial favourite of the late Henry of Lancaster, who now became Lord High

Chancellor; being, at the same time, a Cardinal-Legate, Archbishop of York, and the holder of two Bishoprics, with many other great Church-dignities *in commendam*. So powerful and rich a priest was certainly never seen in England, and he was withal fitted for much honour, being a great statesman and a good scholar, though somewhat proud and vain-glorious; but his full sad fall, many years after this, made me to pity him yet more than I had ever blamed him. In the year 1516, I remember me that the Queen Catherine took unto her chamber in great state, and that we were ordered to make prayers that she should have a good hour; the which did soon after follow in the birth of the Princess Mary, that now is, at Greenwich, on Monday, the 8th day of February, about four of the clock in the morning, whereupon thanksgivings were commanded to be said throughout England. The next year had but few things of much note, saving a great insurrection of the London apprentices against the merchant-strangers of their City, for the which many were executed; and a fearful return of the sweating sickness, which carried away such as were taken with it within three hours after, whereby some towns had half of their inhabitants suddenly swept away.—But all these events, albeit I noted them with some attention when they were first imparted, came unto us so uncertainly, and often so long after the times at which they chanced, that they seemed unto me to be scarcely the tidings

of real actions, but rather the pictures thereof; like unto those which amuse the eyes of childhood, in the history of ages gone by, and leave but few traces upon the wit or the memory.

Howbeit, a season did at last arrive, when tidings of great import unto our Abbey were brought thither with unwonted haste. The youth of the second Harry Tudor had been for the most part spent in revelry and costly disports; for, when he came unto that throne which his father had violently rent from mine, he was much favoured of the people, for his lusty and laughing disposition of mind rather than for his grace or piety. But he now signified that he had a purpose of rendering honour unto the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham, by visiting the same in kingly state, albeit with the lowly demeanour and signs of a pilgrim. He had indeed already travelled hither in 1511, between the Feast of the Purification and the Queen's Churching, and made an offering of half a mark, but such pious conduct as that now declared unto us, was on his part all unlooked-for by me; yet may I say that I was in truth inwardly rejoiced thereat, inasmuch as that the son should thus seem to do some penance, and make some atonement, for the sins of the father.

William Lowth, who, as I have said, was Lord Prior of Walsingham Abbey when I became a Brother thereof, was forced, from a contention with his Canons, to lay down his honours on the 31st day of

August, in the year 1514, after whom came one Richard Vowell, Prior of Lees, in Essex, who held our Abbey at the time of Henry's visit; namely, on Tuesday, the Feast of the Nativity of Our Lady, the Sixth of the Ides of September, or eighth day thereof, in the year of Grace 1517. It was by him deemed good, albeit the King came in such lowly and beseeming guise, that our House and Shrine should make large display of the wealth belonging thereunto: though this methought was vain, seeing that the revenues of the Fraternity were but small, though the riches of St. Mary's Shrine were indeed great.*— These, therefore, were all set forth, to shew how eminent had been the zeal of former benefactors thereunto; and so to win the King to emulate the greatest of their gifts.

The spot wherein the chiefest beauty and glory of this most famous Shrine were shewn, was a dark little boarded Chapel within our unfinished Church, some eight yards long and nearly five broad; on either side whereof, was a narrow door of entrance for such as came hither for devotion or offering. A full sweet perfume was ever kept burning therein, and it had no light but that which the illumined tapers

* Dugdale states the possessions of this Monastery to have been valued at £391 : 11*s.* 7¼*d.* annually; but Speed calls them £446 : 14*s.* 4¾*d.*, besides the offerings to the Shrine, which have been estimated at £260 : 12*s.* 4¼*d.* yearly.

flashed upon the silver, gold, jewels, and rich images, that glistened at the high altar by the Virgin's effigy; beside which stood Brother Hugh Blyford, the Keeper of that Chapel,* in his Canon's black and white habit, to receive such other gifts as should be made unto it. Men might in truth have thought that place the seat of the Saints; and I may not describe the lustrous radiance which surrounded it, from the precious gems heretofore brought unto the Shrine, by such as made offering of their wealth unto the Blessed Virgin and her Son, as the Holy Kings of old did at the Nativity at Bethlehem. Truly rare and beauteous were these jewels, from the rubies and amethysts wherewith the effigy was crowned, unto the wondrous stone at it's feet, which they of France do call a *Crapaudine*, or Toad-stone; because the living creature never shewed itself more plainly, than it was therein expressed.

Nor were our holier treasures forgotten, such as those sacred reliques and marvellous things which we enjoyed by special favour of the Virgin; they being set forth in the most honourable wise. Of these were

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* This officer is mentioned by Blomefield in his History of Norfolk, where it is also stated that he was buried in the Chapel he served in 1534. The unfinished state of Walsingham Abbey Church is noticed by Erasmus, who visited it about the period referred to in the text: he states that the doors and windows were all open, and that the wind blew through the building.

a portion of the Milk of Our Lady, and the Blood of Our Lord, each being kept from every profane touch in crystal glasses at the high-altar. Such were also that miraculous Wicket-gate of the which I have before spoken; and two blessed wells filled with wondrous cold water, from a spring that suddenly burst out of the ground at command of the holy Virgin, of great virtue in curing pains in men's bodies. These fountains have since been defiled, but at this time they might be seen unpolluted, covered over by that no less marvellous house, more hallowed than any which mortal hand hath been employed to raise, seeing that it was brought through the air, many ages before, in the season of mid-winter, when all things were buried in the snow, and placed, where it long stood, over against the little Chapel holding the Virgin's Effigy. A fine green path led unto it, made specially for pilgrims, and a cross stood by, whereat they might kneel and inwardly pray whiles they drank of the waters.

It was from the little Town of North-Basham, two miles distant, that Henry came unto Walsingham, along that most fair and ancient road, which King Richard II., in his eighth year,—1384-85,—did grant a patent for making unto the Virgin's Chapel. Right good care had been taken to consult the truest records of the olden times, to know, by ancient precedent, how we should receive the Royal Pilgrim. He came at length, habited in lowly garb, like any Jerusalemite, with scarf, scrip, and bourdon-staff; covered about

with a long, white, and rough, *sclavina* or robe; and a great hat of skin turned up above his visage: his feet were bare, but I ween it was small penance so to walk, over the soft green-sward which led unto the Chapel at Walsingham. Moreover, Henry was attended herein by many of his Nobles, and his guard going round him on all sides to keep off the press; but albeit he was in so mean a habit, and they were clothed in their wonted bravery, yet were all uncovered save himself, and the King also had a bold step and lofty air, which even in this journey he might not hide, and which shewed him to be the chiefest of all the company. Our Prior and his Canons in their order, met him at Our Lady's Mount of Joy, where the stone cross was set up, and where the Pilgrims unto this Shrine were anciently wont to rest in sight of the end of their travel; and there we gave him to drink of our wondrous wells. When he had knelt and prayed awhile in that place, he was brought into the Church and little Chapel, and approached the Effigy of Our Lady with exceeding reverence, so that all who saw him deemed him to be full of grace, and a true lover of the Holy Church; and his offering was indeed well worthy of the King of England, being a great and rich collar of balas-rubies, most beauteous to behold.

But, Ah me! how little can we blinded mortals deem of the future, by that which we look upon of the present; for how might some of us who thus witness-

ed Henry's unlooked-for act of piety, think that, long ere our mortal course was run, he should become the fiercest enemy and subverter of those very Shrines and Monasteries which he now so deeply venerated. And, yet farther, how might the mind of man ever conceive, that the self-same Effigy which was then so gloriously bedecked, and which the King approached so reverently to adorn yet more with his own princely gift, should, even at his command, be despoiled of all it's treasures; violently torn down from the altar where it had so long stood; and, at last, be defiled and openly burned at Chelsea, in the stormy year of 1539, with such foul scoffings and revilings, that truly my pen refuseth to record them?

But beside King Henry, there was at this time a certain other Pilgrim came unto Walsingham with a devout offering; the same being one Peter Blount, an ancient Goldsmith of good fame, who had long dwelled in Lombard-Street, in the City of London, but was now removed unto Norwich: and when the King had left the altar, he came forward thereunto, in far less state, albeit little less to the pleasure of our Brotherhood. He presented himself at our Shrine, because he deemed it good for his soul's health to bring thither certain gifts; having, as he said, long purposed to make such disposition of some part of his substance, in hope that the intercession of Our Lady and the prayers of her servants, might blot out the sins of his youthful years, and his too-anxious desires

and fraudful endeavours after riches in his later life. By this act he looked to quiet the loud voice of his conscience, which had been suddenly awakened in a shrewd fit of sickness at Dartford, what time he was travelling from Calais towards his home; the which distemper had well nigh given him unto the grave, but that he was cured by the gentle care and leech-like skill of the Austin-Nuns of St. Mary and St. Margaret's Priory there. He did then vow, to go hereafter upon his present pilgrimage; and also to carry certain other gifts unto Dartford, especially a great waxen taper of his own height, to be burned at the high-altar in memory of his cure.* His offering at Walsingham was a golden cup, skilfully chased with the most lively effigies of Christ, the Virgin, and the Apostles, and the martyrdom of the Saints Stephen and Bartholomew; whereunto he added 500 marks of gold,—£333: 6*s.* 8*d.*—to be bestowed in alms, and for the support of our Monastery.

* These offerings were called Statual Tapers; and the *Histoire de Paris* states, that after the battle of Poictiers, on the capture of John, King of France, a taper was placed before the Virgin's altar, in the Church of Nôtre Dame, which was said to be equal to the circumference of Paris; it was rolled round the circle of a wheel, and burned without ceasing. In some cases these waxen gifts were made like effigies, of the height, form, and weight, of the person represented; and figures of sick or refractory animals, were sometimes sent to shrines for their recovery.

Our Prior failed not greatly to thank and to commend Master Blount for his devotion and charity, wherein he had rightly followed the command of Our Lord, in the Gospel, "*Facite vobis amicos de Mammona iniquitatis,*" make unto you friends of the Mammon of iniquity; and farther declared, that he had been right wise in delaying no longer to gain him that quiet of mind which he would assuredly receive from perfecting so pious a vow. The Goldsmith replied unto this, that the Lord Prior had well said, for that when worn by care, or toil, or the coming infirmities of old age, he oft-times thought that his good intent would at last be too late for his rest hereafter; and that, peradventure, he might be called away from earth ere he found space to perform it at all.

"And well I ween, good friend," responded the Prior, "that all men have great cause to think and act as thou hast done; for our mortal bodies be like unto buildings, which yearly, and daily, and hourly, are being taken down, or are falling into decay. But how soon the ruin shall be finished, we know not; and therefore it becometh us at once to do that which we would perform, and to mark well what Our Lord hath said, '*Vigilate, itaque, quia nescitis diem neque horam:*' watch ye, therefore, because ye know not the day nor the hour."—The Prior added hereunto, with wondrous prudence and gravity, though, as methought with somewhat of dishonest covetise,—that, seeing the Goldsmith was now far advanced in

years, and it was a full long and toilsome journey unto Dartford;—peradventure it should tend as much unto his weal hereafter, if he should add that which he designed for the Sisterhood there, unto the gifts he had already made unto our House and Shrine. Yet, natheless, did our Superior say, if Master Blount did still persist in his first intent of bestowing aught at Dartford, it should be carried thither for him; if not by the Prior in person, yet by some safe and speedy messenger: for, that although the Goldsmith had once vowed to go thither himself, yet might he be absolved therefrom by reason of his infirmity, upon sending his offering and journeying thither in spirit.

This courteous offer was gladly received by the Goldsmith, and this course being concluded on, he departed from Walsingham well satisfied at having performed both his vows and offerings with such easy labour. Howbeit, some weeks passed away, ere we received Master Blount's waxen taper and other gifts for the Dartford Nuns; but then did it become matter of debate in the Chapter as to the messengers who should be sent with the same: and it was at last resolved that they should be entrusted unto Father George Gisborough, sometime Sub-Prior of our House, and myself. He, I do hope and believe, is now with God; albeit he died by the late King Henry's command, as did many other pious men, for not acknowledging his Supremacy over the Church, and not con-

senting to surrender unto him our Abbey and Monastery.

For mine own part, albeit there was much honour in the appointment of my Brethren, and I scrupled not to go forth at their call, long and toilsome as the journey might be, yet was it not an employ which I did at all covet. For, beside that I felt no desire to look again upon the world, I knew that I could not travel through London without the painfullest memory of the days that were gone, and of my former dreams of love and the Lady Bride; the which, though now resigned for ever, were, nevertheless, still much too dear unto me. Howbeit, I addressed me to the journey, but all this did I feel in travelling into Kent through Southwark, as I saw the distant towers of Bermondsey Abbey, and bethought me of our last strange and fatal interview therein, with all the chances which had since followed. Yet, notwithstanding these most sad remembrances, I paused not, but with my companions kept forward unto Dartford with all the speed we might; and, within seven days, we arrived at that most fair Convent of Austin-Nuns, which the piety of the Third King Edward of England founded, and dedicated unto the holy Saints Mary and Margaret. It was now, as I do full well remember, the Eve of the Feast of St. Martin, Tuesday, the 10th day of November, about the hour of *Nones*, and one of the fairest and brightest days which the departing year could shew, being like it's last

smile cast upon the coming Winter, or the glad tranquillity of a Saint looking upon approaching death.

I was much rejoiced, at thus seeing our long and wearisome journey of nearly 130 miles, brought unto it's conclusion; and I may not conceal that I also felt somewhat of worldly pride and pleasure, in looking forward unto the honourable welcome we should receive, from being the bearers of such costly gifts and good tidings unto the Convent. But when we declared our names and mission unto an ancient Nun at the gate, and thereupon desired to see the Lady Prioress, I felt both anger and amaze at finding none such joyous greeting as I had looked to meet; for sad and solemn were the countenances of all whom I beheld, and brief and gloomy were their answers unto our gladsome salutations. Howbeit, full soon were we told that the Prioress of that House, who was much beloved and reverenced of all for her gentleness, piety, many virtues, and various excellent gifts,—was even then lying sick unto death; having for a long space languished under a wasting fever, which was now known to be mortal, her last hour being near at hand. I ween that these were in sooth melancholy tidings, yet did I know well that much of the body's sorrows might be cured, by cheering and giving joy unto the heart; and thereupon I did entreat, that the Lady Prioress should forthwith be told of the costly gifts sent unto her House, by the hands of the Sub-Prior of Walsingham and Brother Richardus of Ely:

and in this would I not be gainsaid, because of the great good which I looked to rise therefrom, though some doubted whether it might not be altogether too much for her weakened frame. But presently it was shewn that I had not erred in this counsel; for the *Formaria*, or over-seeing Nun, who had told her thereof, came suddenly back, and said that, upon hearing our mission, her dim and closing eyes became suddenly opened and lighted up. She gave unto us great thanks for coming in such happy time to shed comfort upon her parting hours; and she added that, as we were of the same Order as her own Convent, she would now make her Confession, desiring that one of us should forthwith attend her to receive it, and entreating all our prayers for her safe passage, in that most solemn change which she well knew was now close at hand.

The aged Sub-Prior, my companion, did hereupon request and direct me to take the confession of the Lady Prioress, adding that he would remain to see the gifts safely bestowed in the Convent-sacristy; and I therefore followed the weeping Nun with much solemnity and sorrow. And now did I feel all mine own spiritual weakness and unworthiness, and lamented, with unfeigned humility, that my learning and piety were no greater, and that my former life had not better fitted me for the duty which I was now about to perform; of aiding, by my ghostly counsel, one renowned for her holiness, in the very moment when she was called unto her everlasting home.

On passing into her presence, I beheld her resting back upon a little couch, for so great were the pains of her disease, that for many days she had been unable to lie down thereon; yet distressed with pain, as in truth she was, she uttered no voice of complaint, so that there was a death-like stillness in the chamber, and I drew in my breath from reverence. The light of that fair day, too, was also shaded therein with a fitting gloom, so that I might not at first see the pale cheek and heavenly look of the dying sufferer; but on advancing unto her more closely,—Saints and Angels! —I saw that she was the LADY BRIDE PLANTAGENET!

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SCENE OF PARTING IN THE CHAMBER OF DEATH.

Yet do I live? Oh! how shall I sustain
  This vast unutterable weight of woe?
This worse than hunger, poverty, or pain,
  Or all the complicated ills below:
She, in whose life my hopes were treasured all
  Is gone!—for ever fled!
These eyes, these tear-swoln eyes, beheld her fall!
Ah, no!—she lives on some far-happier shore,
She lives,—but, cruel thought, she lives for me no more!
* * * *
How shall I e'er forget that dreadful hour,
When feeling death's resistless power,
My hand she press'd wet with her falling tears,
And thus in faltering accents spake her fears!

SHAW'S MONODY.

OH Memory!—Memory!—I ween that I have full little cause to summon thine aid, to depict the scene which was now about to open unto me; for so deeply, yea, so indelibly, are all the events of that most sad hour impressed upon my soul, that they can never be absent from me whilst breath and sense be left unto my mortal frame!—And if aught of earthly affection or sorrow *can* call forth the tear of human compas-

sion; or if there be indeed a chord in the breasts of others, which, like-tuned unto that within mine own, will respond unto the like touch,—then may my feelings at this time be somewhat conceived of; and it will in sooth be deemed that I underwent no common trial. And if, perchance, in the deep sorrow thereof, my reason or devotion bent in the unequal struggle, I well trust that He, who is all strength, and who knoweth the weakness of his creatures, did both pity and forgive it.

In mine earlier years I had sometimes beheld young and noble beauty, with all that wondrous rapture which the poets have affirmed it doth ever inspire; and in the countless charms of dazzling eyes, shining hair, the white ivory gates within the lips, and cheek of fairest rose-colour, I have oft-times thought that I looked upon all the richest creations of Nature, blended in a most rare master-piece. And, although it was not my fortune to be mated with one of these most lovely beings, I have noted, not with envy, but with a fervent, yet secret, desire for the like happiness,—that Woman is, unto our race, the sweetest partner in joy, and the kindest soother in sorrow. For her smiles do ever throw their fair and beaming light, over that which had else been most mournful, desolate, or void of life; and, when the storm of sorrow hath passed away, she appeared unto me like the bow in the brightening sky, the living security of God's everlasting covenant of goodness unto man.—Yet do I well

deem, that not all the blaze of beauty in it's gayest and most blooming hour, did ever seem unto my view so rich and glorious, as did the calm, though fading, features of the dying Lady Bride, before whom I now stood. Albeit her cheek was full pale from sickness, yet all that pure dignity which so marked her youth still remained; with which were sweetly pictured suffering fortitude, resignation unto the will of God, and Christian benevolence unto all on earth.

This unconquerable yet gentle spirit seemed unto me to cast the semblance of an unearthly triumph over the scene of mortality: and so much did she then appear above the common weakness of our nature, that methought she might well have said for herself,—if indeed ever child of earth might utter the holy Apostle's exulting speech,—"Oh Death! where is thy sting?—Oh Grave! where is thy victory?"

When I approached the Prioress, as I have afore recounted, with much amaze and a tremulous voice I gave unto her my benediction; but as one of the Nuns was then engaged in ministering a medicine unto her, the pause gave unto me time to regain somewhat of my tranquillity. To one who had been so long schooled by danger ever to wear a cautious guise unto the world, and had been taught by holier wisdom the frailty of all earthly affections, I ween that it asked but brief time and little effort to assume the semblance of calmness, albeit full great was the tumult of mine agitated spirit within. For, I bethought

me that, perchance, she might have no memory of me now; so that I should lose the sweet communion with her which I had already begun to hope for: and, although I might disclose myself in the secresy of confession, I did much doubt whether it would not in truth be profaning her purified spirit in it's flight towards Heaven, to break upon it's holy repose with aught of the unquiet passions or vain desires of a mortal.

But notwithstanding these inward struggles, I was outwardly tranquil, and the Lady Bride was not less so; albeit speech seemed scarcely wanting to make me known unto her, for the first glance which she cast upon me, though it was but for a moment, declared full surely that she well remembered him whom she then beheld. Yet, natheless, her look had much of amazement, doubt, and even blame, but these were soon exchanged for her wonted gentleness, and her visage again returned unto it's calm sweetness; for albeit my name might sound familiar to her ear, yet did she much marvel to see me in that garb and place. She even doubted if her sense served her truly, and, when convinced that she really beheld me, she would have reproved my coming thus as an artful device; but anon she yielded unto the words of truth, and rejoiced greatly to see one whom she had so long known, like herself withdrawn from the world unto an holy retirement. Howbeit she did promptly restrain her surprise at seeing me, and gave direction

unto her handmaid, with the *Discretæ*, or attendant Nuns, who until now had awaited in the chamber, that they should go forth awhile; for, said she, "I would speak with this holy man alone, since I have much to impart unto him, and more than is meet to be heard by others than himself. Therefore withdraw, my daughters, for a space, yet still remain so near at hand, as to answer upon brief summons."

Hereupon the Sisters withdrew, and I was left alone with the Prioress; the which when she saw, she said unto me in a faint, yet solemn, voice, "Is this, in truth, good Richard, God's mercy unto his fainting servant, to behold thee in such a habit and in such a moment? or are they but a feigned garb and mission wherein thou hast come hither, again to seek speech with me, having learned the place of my retreat? Yet forgive me, if, for a moment, I seem to doubt thee wrongfully."

Unto this I answered, "Never believe it, Lady, that I could become so profane an impostor; and, in sooth, I have certain of our Monastery with me, who can well testify that I am no other than what I do seem: and that I have, for these seven years past, been one of that Brotherhood in whose habit I am now clothed."

"This is indeed great and holy consolation!" hereupon exclaimed the Prioress, her eyes glistening with triumph and joy, and looking fervently upward unto that Heaven whereto she herself was hastening.

"These are truly joyful tidings, Richard; for my soul seeketh to be glad in thy salvation, which hath heretofore been much disquieted by misgivings touching thy temporal and spiritual welfare: but now do I trust, that in good hour thou wilt follow me, unto that blessed land where I hope to be before the sun sets on earth, and where the rays of his glory do never go down

The Lady Bride's fervent desires after my soul's happiness, and her solemn, though joyful and triumphant, look unto present death, called forth such a sudden flood of sweet sorrow within my bosom, that it altogether unmanned me; and, taking her thin white hand, I cast me at her feet, as almost worshiping one who seemed so much divine. If I erred herein, it was unwittingly and without intent, for in truth I beheld nothing earthly in her, and so bowed me unto the heavenly reflection in her visage. I thought, I only gazed upon the departing Saint; and if the Church's favour be bestowed upon those, who devoutly journey unto the Shrines of the glorified servants of God, it seemeth unto me that my sin was only in *anticipating* the reverence which should be hereafter paid unto one, who, though now an inhabitant of earth, was so soon to be translated unto the skies. Howbeit, the thought of her speedy death filled my soul with sadness, and I ventured to say that, peradventure, it might not yet be so near as she deemed it.

"If thou desirest my happiness, Richard," fervently responded the dying Prioress, "cause me not to think so: for my human weakness delights it with the belief that, as this is the Eve of St. Martin, when I was born unto this world of sin, and when I was professed and consecrated unto a religious life, so it shall behold my new birth into the world of glory!"

I could not reply hereunto, from my sorrowful admiration of the blessed creature upon whom I gazed; who, thereupon calling up her swiftly-declining strength, thus continued. "I pray thee, kind friend, rise, since it is not for the Confessor to kneel before his penitent."

"Oh, Lady!" returned I, "believe me I cannot refrain therefrom, since it is unto me an hour of much weakness, and this lowly posture doth best declare the fervour, the devotion, and the sincerity of mine heart."

"Yet, nevertheless, rise and be calm, good Richard," answered the Prioress, "whilst I assay to speak unto thee a while. I would now tell thee of certain passages of my life, not, indeed, in shrift, because confessions be ever best given unto Him who fashioneth the heart, and who alone knoweth the sins and secrets thereof. Unto that All-seeing God, therefore, have I already often declared my transgressions with much sorrow; and tears, bitter tears, have been poured over the remembrance of times gone by, and the avowal of feelings which it were sinful to che-

rish.——His peace at length came down upon my penitent spirit; and it was no delusion, seeing that it's influence was sweet and silent as the summer-dews, and did indeed passing all understanding.—And, therefore, albeit I desired to see a Confessor, I have but little to pour into the bosom of the Holy Church; save gratitude that the lowly plant, which, methinks, would have been blighted by the storms of the world, hath been reared and protected in the garden of God upon earth; and, as my soul trusteth, made fit for blooming still more fairly in His Paradise on high."

The Prioress paused for a brief space, yet could I utter nought in reply, from amaze at the wondrous grace and eloquence which seemed poured upon her at this hour; and, therefore, it was without speech of mine intervening, that she again continued thus.

"Truly, my friend, I look unto that immortal rest with much hope and gladness; for *here*, as thou well knowest, I have had mine hours of trial, of temptation, and even of suffering.—Yes, He who guideth His children with a merciful restraint, hath not withheld from me those tokens of His adoption. I have in truth passed through seasons of earthly weakness and wanderings of thought, which woman's heart and tongue would never acknowledge, save in prayer or at the dying hour. And, I have indeed now to confess how my thoughts have been ever too prone to stray unto thee, Plantagenet, and how often mine heart hath panted to know thy fate, and even that I should again

behold thee.—This unhoped-for blessing is now given unto me, and he for whom I too often sighed with a mortal's passion, is happily present with me in the hour which closes all my human sorrows, to behold how earthly love, though verily strong as death, can yet be conquered by heavenly grace; and as a true son of the Holy Church, to aid me with his ghostly counsels, and guide my spirit in it's flight."

"Alas! dearest Lady Bride," exclaimed I with tearful voice, "Alas! I am all unworthy of such a part: and 'tis rather my sad happiness to learn of thee how a Christian should die."

"Be it so, then, good Plantagenet," answered she; "and right glad shall I be to point out the happy road which thou shalt hereafter travel: for I have ever prayed that thou mightest be blessed both in life and death, albeit thy fate was yet unknown unto me; and, perchance, I did so with more fervour than for aught beside. Now, my kindest friend, will I hide it from thee no longer, since we are about to part for ever upon earth; I will say to thee that I have loved thee but too well, from our meeting at Windsor; and however I did appear to suppress mine affections under the semblance of devotion to the cloister, God and mine own soul well know the trial which I endured, to gain even that seeming victory, whilst thine image remained but all too perfectly in mine heart."

The Prioress paused hereat from increasing weakness, yet would she not that I should call in any aid;

and, therefore, after remaining silent for a brief space, she again called up her sinking strength, and then spake thus, with wondrous fervency.—"All this, good Richard, was but blighted vanity; but He who wisely withholdeth any unfit desire which his offspring conceive, faileth not, like a kind father, more largely and excellently to requite them for the same. It was not His good pleasure that our lives on earth should glide away together, but He hath given us a far better blessing, inasmuch as He ordained that both should become devoted unto His service, and so be advancing, as it were side by side, and making them ready for an everlasting union in the world to come!"

Whilst the Lady Bride thus spake, her life seemed suddenly to kindle up within her so brightly and forcefully, that I again deemed her, for a moment, to be less near her end than she believed: but too soon I saw her sinking from the effort which she had made. Yet even in her very decline there were both beauty and dignity; and I could not but liken her to some noble temple, consecrated unto God, which, though fallen into ruins from the wasting hand of Time, or shaken unto it's very base by an overwhelming earthquake, did still shew both fair and stately, even whilst it's dome was trembling and it's columns fell.—After another short pause the Prioress again addressed me, albeit her speech was often broken by sad swoonings which might not be restrained. She told me that, after we last parted, she remained but short space at

Bermondsey, and then was suddenly removed, yet with her own consent, unto the Convent at Dartford, where she was consecrated a Nun on the return of her birth-day; of which place she was at length elected Prioress, and so had remained until the day whereon we met.

"In carefully acquitting me of the duties of that holy office," continued she, "I found the greatest delight which my wounded spirit might know: for albeit my thoughts would, often-times wander from this hallowed House, yet was it not unto a world of glittering vanity, nor unto scenes of heedless laughter or tumultuous joy,—but unto one beloved fellow-creature, whose temporal welfare I knew was in much hazard, and whose everlasting safety I deemed might also be unsecured. At length, Richard, I heard of the fire at Sheen Palace, whither it had been told me that thou wert conveyed, wherein it was said that many of the inmates were destroyed, and I did long deem that thou wert one of them, seeing that thy life was cared for by none; but afterward came that which I thought to be more certain tidings of thy death, when the boat which carried thee unto a more perilous prison was whelmed at London Bridge, and all on board drowned, even thy mantle being found torn and floating on the water. It is true that somewhat whispered me of thy possible escape, and prudence in thus casting away thine habit; and, therefore, my daily prayers were made for thee whether living or dead. And

this day, upon hearing thy well-known name, the same hope told me that it might indeed be thee; yet did I not dare specially to summon thee, lest mine earthly love should triumph, albeit I was full fain to behold thee once more, and to conjure thee to hasten after me on the road to blessedness!"

Having thus spoken, with many interruptions of extreme weakness, the Prioress sank back upon her couch, as if all exhausted of living strength and nigh unto Death. In this state of rapid decay, I gazed upon her with the same ravishment at her fervent piety, as I had before done in beholding her beauty. For now the whole course of her thoughts did appear unto me so truly to accord with those which Faith should inspire in the soul, that the brightness and tranquillity of her passage from Time unto Eternity, the beauty of her departure from life here unto immortality hereafter, seemed in lively picture to pourtray unto my mind, how the holy Patriarch walked with God and was not; becoming the habitant of Heaven, yet without putting off his earthly form.

But albeit the strength of the Lady Bride did appear to be now full swiftly going from her, yet would she not that I should summon her handmaiden, because, she said, she had yet a weighty matter to disclose unto me ere she departed, which did much concern both her happiness and mine: whereupon she again spake unto me thus, when she had tasted of a cordial and had somewhat recovered her spirit.

"And now, my kind friend Plantagenet, having told thee of mine entrance and tranquil life in this Convent, I must add thereunto that, albeit I thought it a full holy and happy place, I soon learned that, since the loss of Eden, there is no true Paradise to be found upon earth. After I was elected Prioress here, it became my sad duty,—as others told me, and as I deemed right,—to enforce the rigors of our Rule against one of our Sisterhood, for great transgression against the Church; she being accused in Chapter by divers of the Nuns, of an unholy attachment unto the heretic writings of Wiclif. And so resolute was she herein, that even unto her last sickness Sister Maria remained unchanged, though still pious and happy; and, at length, the book of the New Testament which Wiclif rendered into English, was found concealed beneath her couch, like some hidden treasure. Whereupon I reproved her with harshness, albeit, in mine ignorance, with a real abhorrence of the crime whereof she was guilty."

"And herein," answered I, "did you piously perform your duty, and but enforced the Rule of which you were the Superior."

"Nay, Richard," replied the Prioress, most sadly smiling and shaking her head, "hear my story to an end, ere you deem so.—The offending Sister sank beneath the rigorous dealing and reproach which I permitted to be used towards her; but albeit I was less harsh than the Chapter and our Statutes required me

to be, mine heart smote me heavily at the moment it was told me that her life had fled: nevertheless keener sorrows yet remained in store for me.—The book found in the persecuted Nun's cell, I took into mine own keeping, to examine it at fitting season; but although I had often looked upon the Gospels in St. Hierome's Latin, I declare unto thee, Plantagenet, that when I set me to read them in our own tongue, they came so suddenly and closely home unto mine heart and conscience, that the one seemed unto me like having a great treasure in a locked casket, and the other like owning it in free and full possession.—Now I felt that it might indeed be good to set forth the Book of Christ in the common speech, so that all who run might have the Word of Eternal Life; and that the way-faring man, though a fool, might read of his road thither.—Upon this, therefore, do I judge that Sister Maria had been harshly dealt with by all our House; and specially by me, for that her reviled book had opened my blinded eyes, and hath since been my solace by day and my companion in the night!"

Hereupon did I suddenly start back, it might be a pace or more, at hearing one so fair and beloved as the Lady Bride Plantagenet, and of such exalted piety as the Prioress of Dartford, speak in favour of translating the Sacred Scriptures, and of the new doctrines and heresies which even then were triumphantly advancing. Mine emotion was not hidden from her who conversed with me, since she soon

marked and understood it, and answered unto it thus.

"Be not dismayed, mine ever kind friend Plantagenet, nor deem me in this to have wandered from the path of Christian Faith. Rather would I say, do thou also read the Gospels of the Evangelists with the Deeds of the Apostles, as the good Preacher of Lutterworth hath rendered them into English, than join in blaming those whose happiness it hath been thus to know them.—Why, Richard, why, I pray you, should the unbounded light of Christ be in anywise concealed or shaded unto the eyes of men? or wherefore should we hide from the lowlier children of God, the Holy Scriptures, which for them, as well as for us, do in truth contain the words of eternal life?—Truly, methinks there may well be urged in this matter, that which holy Peter of old answered unto them that reproached him, saying, 'If God gave the same grace to them, as to us that believeden in the Lord Jesu Christ, who are we that we may forbid the Lord, that He give not the Holy Ghost to them that believeden in the name of Jesu Christ?'"

I may not here set down with what declining life, frequent pausings, and faint speech, the Lady Bride held on throughout this converse, albeit they were so piteous, and her weakness did so greatly increase, as to move me to entreat of her not to discourse farther at that season: whereunto she replied, that the matter of which she spake seemed charged upon her soul

to deliver unto me, and that until this was done, she was borne up by a strength which she knew well was far greater than her own. In response, therefore, unto her former words, I noted unto her what divers holy and venerable men have said upon the *sin*, as they deemed it, of giving the Word of God in the common speech.

Whilst I spake she sighed heavily, and replied, "Such I do well know hath been the language of many wise men in the Church, and often have I blamed mine own desire herein; much fearing that, in coveting to read the Holy Book in English, I sinned like Eve, who first sought to eat of the fruit of the forbidden Tree of Knowledge. Yet, good Richard, have I been most wondrously refreshed and comforted, by the close union which was thus formed between mine own soul and the immortal Word of God; though I was doomed to hide, and even somewhat to discountenance, that which in my secret heart I could not but approve as most excellent. And for such as desire that the Gospel shall *never* be spread abroad in the common tongue, it seemeth unto me that they follow the guileful artifices of the Heathens; whose holiest precepts were not given openly, to make mankind virtuous or blessed, but veiled under evil rites, and confined unto their cruel and mysterious priests."

"Oh! dearest Lady Bride," then said I, "not in this most solemn hour, let voice of thine sanction

these mad and daring novelties, with which the adversaries of our Holy Church are even now striving to overthrow it."

"Fear not for me," answered she, as her voice sank lower and her eyes again closed, "Fear not for me, —since I know in whom I have believed."——Then, after pausing awhile, the Prioress again raised herself, and with new and sudden animation, and a wondrous light on her visage, she continued,—"Thou hast well said, Plantagenet, it is indeed a solemn hour with me, seeing that I am standing between life and death; and, like him who stood upon the top of Pisgah, overlooking both the wilderness of this world and much of the glorious Canaan to which I am hastening. And, perchance, this solemn hour, giveth even unto mortal creatures somewhat of immortal knowledge; since I feel it written upon my soul, that the Lord is about to rise and mightily to refresh the nations with his presence! That a great overthrow is coming upon the corrupted Clergy of this realm! That many of our superstitious rites shall wane and die away, in the plain purities of the advancing Gospel; and that the TRANSLATED WORD shall speedily be spread through this land, from the throne even unto the hovel! for Kings shall come unto the brightness of it's rising.—I depart in the twilight of these things, but you shall behold the sun rise; and I pray that he may shine forth upon you with healing in his wings!"

As the dying Prioress spake, I stood and gazed upon her with utter amazement, for unto me she seemed like some holy Prophetess, in the very moment when unmeasurable inspiration was poured into her soul: I spake not, from wonder at the power and eloquence of her speech, and I almost doubted to breathe, lest I should interrupt her wondrous discourse.

Howbeit, her strength was now almost spent, and it was in a fainter and more broken voice that she said, "Truly, Plantagenet, even in this last hour of mine existence, I cannot but feel a full strong assurance, that to make the Word of Truth plainly and widely known, is to spread the power and realm of the Most High; whilst to keep it in an unspoken tongue is to bury the Eternal Jewel of Mankind. For, I beseech you, are all unlettered men to perish because they wist not the speech of heathen Rome; or why should our land be the lowest of Christendom, in that it hath *not* the Scriptures, the Law of God and our Faith, in it's own language? Oh, Richard! Richard!—friend of the friendless Bride Plantagenet,—who art the dearest object in my closing eyes, believe me when I say, that I desire nothing better for thee than well to know and revere this most Holy Book in our own tongue.—Alas! Plantagenet, my death is so far like that of my beloved mother in Bermondsey Abbey, that I may well say, as she did in her will, I have no worldly goods to do any a pleasure with,

nor to reward any according to mine heart and mind. —Yet unto thee, most dear friend, do I give this book of the English New Testament, by the learned and holy Wiclif, for such I dare well think him to have been; and this little tome of Offices, which thou gavest me at our last parting, and which hath never left me since that hour. I can well think that thou hast preserved my ring, if it have not been rent from thee; and so I ween that I shall not be altogether forgotten by thee."

As she gave the books into mine hands and spake these words, my spirit was again suddenly melted within me, and I said, "Forgotten! Oh! dearest Lady Bride, when *thou* art forgotten, Richard Plantagenet will have neither power of memory nor aught to remember."

"These confessions being past, then," resumed the Prioress, "my soul is full of blessed expectancy and ready to be gone; having now nought to sorrow or to hope for, saving that I yet lament mine harshness, or that of mine office, unto one whose feelings I do gladly partake of."

It was my great desire, however much mine heart should be disquieted by the sorrows of the hour, to keep my spirit yet tranquil and unshaken; but now my tears flowed in despite of all mine efforts to restrain them, and, moreover, my soul was in great dread from the peril which I feared might await the Lady Bride, from her holding what I then deemed

most hazardous and evil doctrines. Yet even whilst I did what was in me to recall her therefrom into the bosom of the Church, I much wondered at the more than human courage, with which she had prepared to encounter the Last Enemy. For, all throughout mine interview with her, even unto her death, a heavenly hope seemed to flourish healthfully and vigorously upon her countenance; even as I have seen some fair and fallen column, wreathed around with sweet flowers and green moss, and blooming with all the fresh and living verdure of the Spring.

But now the hour had arrived, when she was to render up her spirit unto the God who gave it, since she faintly said, "I can no more, Richard; give me thine absolution and benediction,—for the moment hath now arrived when we must part for the last time;—and, may He, whom I implore mercifully to receive his returning creature,—cause His best blessing eternally to descend upon thee,—my Brother —and my friend—bringing thee in His own good hour, into His purified fold!—and forget not—that I wait for thee in glory.—Call in the Sisters, Plantagenet,—and Fare thee—well!" And as I sorrowfully turned me from her, I heard her add in a low fervent voice, "Lord have mind of me, now Thou art in Thy Kingdom."

Thereupon hastily entered the Nuns, with certain others to give her the Viaticum and Extreme Unction, but she was now so weak that they could do no

more than support her, yet did her dying eyes beam upon me with love unutterable. It was now sun-set, and at that moment was heard the swell of the organ from the Chapel, where even-song was being performed; and then followed the choral voices of those Sisters, who owed their advancement in piety unto her most religious care and holy pattern. I ween that all who heard those strains, felt them to be full fitting for the departure of one so blessed into the World of Spirits; and I ween that the Lady Bride thought so herself, for when the *Nunc Dimittis* was heard, she strove to raise herself, and spake somewhat in a voice that might not be understood. The Nuns declared it to be the Latin words of the holy Simeon's hymn, but I rather trow that they were those from Wiclif's Translation of St. Luke's Gospel, seeing that they did refer both unto her readiness to die, and unto the rising light which she had found for herself, and expected for others, in the blessings of the Translated Gospel.

"LORD, NOW LEEVEST THOU THY SERVANT, IN PEACE. FOR MINE EYEN HAN SEYN THINE HEALTH: WHICH THOU HAST MADE READY BEFORE THE FACE OF ALL PEOPLE; LIGHT TO THE SHEWING OF HEATHEN MEN, AND GLORY OF THY PEOPLE ISRAEL!"

Such, I do well believe, were the dying words of the Lady Bride Plantagenet, upon ending the which, she languidly bent her head as if in a last farewell; whereupon one of the Nuns signed unto me to with-

draw, and so I turned me from that scene of triumph, though of almost more than mortal suffering, and from the face and form I had so long loved to look upon.

I have so often mused over the passages which I have now recounted, that they are all impressed upon my memory with wondrous exactness and power; yet is there one thing, which I may not omit to note, whereof I know not what to say, whether in truth it really chanced, or whether it were but a dream of phantasy, either at the very time, or even in after years. Howbeit, whatever it were, this is the sum thereof.—When I turned to depart from the Prioress, I gave her my last adieu and benediction; which she had no power to answer but by a weak motion of her head: but as I was leaving the chamber, methought I again heard her well-known and beloved voice saying, "Farewell, Richard!—Farewell, Plantagenet!" in it's saddest and sweetest tones. I started with amaze at hearing her so accost me before strangers, and hastily turned me again, but in doing so mine eyes chanced to fall upon the casement, whereat methought I heard the soft fluttering of wings, and I beheld a Dove, more lustrous and silvery white than any which I ever saw upon earth, suddenly fly therefrom into the brightest part of the heavens where the sun was sinking, and so disappear!—In truth I dare not affirm, that it was the Lady Bride's beatified soul which I did thus see and hear; yet is it certain that she died at the very moment thereof, as I knew from

the sudden cry of the Sisters, though I continued gazing upon that wondrous vision, until they recalled me by noting the intentness wherewith I was looking upon that, which appeared to them but as an empty space!

I then turned me once more unto the couch of the departed Prioress, to behold her dear countenance for the last time; wherein I saw there was but little change from dying. For the brightness of unshaken Faith and unspotted virtue were upon it, which made her last moments wondrously radiant; even as the sun never looketh more glorious, than when his parting rays are cast upward unto the mountain's summit, as he sinketh to his rest upon the glowing bosom of the western wave.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RECLUSE'S LAST SORROWS AND TRIALS — THE DISSOLUTION OF RELIGIOUS HOUSES.

He who hath bent him o'er the dead
Ere the first day of Death is fled,—
Before Decay's effacing fingers
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers,
And mark'd the mild angelic air,
The rapture of repose that's there,
The fix'd, yet tender, tints that streak
The languor of the placid cheek,
And—but for that sad shrouded eye,
That fires not, wins not, weeps not, now,
And, but for that chill changeless brow;
Where cold Obstruction's apathy
Appals the gazing mourner's heart,—
Yes,—but for these, and these alone,
Some moments, aye one treacherous hour
He still might doubt the Tyrant's power:
So fair, so calm, so softly seal'd,
The first, last, look by Death reveal'd.

LORD BYRON.

AND THERE SHALL COME A KING and confesse your Religions,
And bete you, as the Bible telleth, for breaking of your Rule.
And amende Moniales, Monkes, and Chanoines;—
And then shall the Abbot of England, and all his issue for ever,
HAVE A KNOCKE OF A KING, AND INCURABLE SHALL BE THE WOUNDE!

PROPHECY IN THE VISION OF PIERCE PLOUGHMAN.

IT is full sad and sweet to look upon the mortal remains, of one whom in life we were wont to admire

and to love: it is full sad to think how that countenance, which was of late so rich in beauty and lively emotion, and how those eyes which glistened so lustrously, and the tongue which could discourse with highest wisdom or with holiest eloquence,—have all become the prey of Death, and are for ever dark, motionless, and mute. Yet, I ween, that amidst all the kindly lamentations which sorrow wakeneth at such a moment, it is also full soothing to mark the quiet rest, which the happily-parted dead do seem already to partake of; even in the brief space ere we note that the loathly work of decay is advancing, or the worm beginneth to revel upon the charms of his fallen victim.

All this did I feel, full sadly and truly, at that solemn hour, when it was mine to gaze upon the lifeless form and visage of the departed Lady Bride. But though I did much lament me that one so pious, and noble, and beauteous, should fall thus early into the sepulchre; yet could I not look upon that which she had left of her mortality, without thinking that she had but the sooner retreated unto an holy and blessed rest; and that, with such hopes as her's, it was, in truth, happiness thus speedily to have crossed over the troubled sea of life, and to have gained the eternal shores of the world beyond it.—And I do well trust that God can bear me witness, that my pious and hopeful musings at this time, have not in any sort been altered by aught which hath since chanced: albeit I once thought that it would have been happy for me

had I also arrived at mine appointed resting-place, ere I had counted another year beyond the Lady Bride's death: yet can I now well see the vanity and folly of my wish; that length of days, sorrowful as many of them have proved, hath been given unto me for a purpose of good; and that it is not for the vessel of clay to strive with him who frameth it, nor for man to question the decree of his Maker:—in brief, whatever may be his yearnings after his immortal change, that he should patiently finish his appointed day, saying, "Not my will, but Thine be done!"

I will not now recount aught of the last rites which were rendered unto the departed Prioress, albeit until the tomb was closed over her I lingered at the Convent with my fellows, and even took a melancholy part in singing for her the Mass for the Dead, and seeing her most honourably interred in the Chapel. I was in truth a most sorrowful mourner, for I did ever greatly desire to descend with her unto the tomb; being full sad, and even dismayed, when I bethought me how long the years might be which should pass away before that we should meet again.

Yet until the day when the Lady Bride thus became numbered with the dead, I was, in truth, less weaned from the vain hopes of this world than might become one of the holy life whereunto I had professed myself; since, albeit I had much desired to put them from my thoughts, yet in despite of me they would ever and anon turn unto her, whose sway over

mine heart had alway been most wondrous. Waking dreams, moreover, were wont to spring up in my mind, as it were in very mockery of my better reason, and featly to shadow forth what strange chances might arise to restore me unto the world, raise me unto loftiest rank and power,—perchance unto a throne,—and, more than all, give the Lady Bride unto my love. Nevertheless, much did I strive to overcome these lurking visions of vanity, although mine efforts were not seldom in vain; and mortal affections too often withdrew my thoughts and desires from Heaven.—But now a sudden and a solemn change had passed over the fashion of my life, and the dearest object of my fondest and wildest wishes was withdrawn for ever; so that for me the whole world no longer possessed aught, which might interrupt meditations more befitting unto my profession and character. Mortality and vanity had been stamped in fearful characters upon all I held noblest, or sweetest, or loveliest; and I was now no longer to be allured by the fairest prospects of fame, or joy, or riches, which the earth might offer.

After our return unto Walsingham, my life passed like the still and silent waters of the Dead Sea, in a sad, yet peaceful, course of unchanging religious offices and duties, the which I had neither desire nor temptation to break; so that days, and months, and years rolled by me almost unknown. Nevertheless, I failed not to mark the return of the day when the

Lady Bride was born and became beatified, by a yearly pilgrimage unto her tomb, and offering my most fervent prayers for her soul's health. At these seasons, moreover, I did rejoice that, by their succession, they did ever advance me nearer and nearer unto Eternity, which I deemed could alone fill up the desolate void within my soul:—that Eternity, which, however fearful it seemeth unto mortals in their lusty youth, the faint and worn-out traveller full greatly desireth to reach, as a refuge and a home.

I trow well, moreover, that the tidings, which from time to time I heard of the world, were not such as to make me greatly desire that my stay herein should be prolonged; since in truth I weened that the last days were now come, as foretold by the holy 'Postles, Peter and Powle, wherein scoffers should appear walking after their own lusts. At this time began many to mock at the Faith of the Church of Rome, from the questioning about the Pope's Indulgences, begun by that learned and ardent young doctor, Martin Luther, in the Church of Wittemburg in Almaine, on the 31st day of October in the year 1517: for albeit divers Papal Constitutions had openly condemned the shameless sale of those remissions from the earthly penalties of sin, which the Pontiffs were wont to grant unto such as confessed them, and joined in the Crusades, or gave money thereunto, or did any acts of Christian charity;—yet had those decrees been too often disregarded, and Indulgences were not seldom

made the means of gathering ungodly lucre, for the fostering of covetise, or of aiding unlawful ambition and desire of rule. In especial, they were at this time published and sold in Poland and France, and the Northern parts of Germany, to aid in the building of that most gorgeous Church of St. Peter at Rome, the which, though it is now full thirty-five years since it was begun, is not yet brought unto perfection. Howbeit, for the gathering of these monies in Almaine, the Pope's Indulgences were offered not only in sermons from the pulpits, but were also sold in streets and markets, taverns and private houses; whilst it was affirmed that all who bought them, profligate as they might be, did either open the gate of Heaven for themselves, or forthwith released a departed soul from the pains of purgatory. If this were true, it was indeed foul and daring impiety, to think that any mortal should have power to buy off the righteous sentence of an incorruptible and eternal Judge; yet some men do say that it was not so, but that Luther's preaching against the same, arose out of the counsels of one Staupitz, Vicar of the Austin-Friars, and the jealousy which was between that Order and the Dominicans. Howbeit, whatever it were, now began that reformation in the Christian Church, which, I question not that He, who bringeth good out of evil, and light out of darkness, and who maketh even the wrath of man to praise Him,—will at length work out and establish unto His own glory.

I will not here relate more of the hazardous, though triumphant, march and labours of Luther, to bring about this mighty work, nor how he went on from questioning the Pope's Indulgences to doubt of his doctrines, and thence to the unlearned and vicious lives of the Clergy; the which were but all too well known, both in our own realm and in the country of Almaine. And indeed the increase and fatal end, of the ignorance and evil deeds of our English Monks, had full long since been foretold; and it was mine to see their overthrow fulfilled, and even in some degree to partake thereof. For the Venerable Bede wondrously spake of it, full 800 years before it came to pass, in his pious and learned letter on the state of the Church in his days;* and the wise, yet biting verses, of that

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* This Epistle is supposed to have been the very last of Bede's writings, and was probably composed in A. D. 735. It is particularly remarkable for advising the suppression of some of the English Religious Houses for the establishment and support of new Bishoprics, as being more beneficial to the Church: and because many of the former institutions fell far short of their rules, whilst others were serviceable to neither God nor the Commonwealth; the exercises of piety and discipline not being practised in them, nor their estates held by such as would defend the country. Part of the prophecy from the Visions of Pierce Ploughman above referred to, will be found prefixed to the present chapter; this remarkable passage is contained in the Sixth division of the poem, and is inserted in manuscripts which are older than the year 1400. Dr. Whit-

shrewd Priest, Robert Langlande, in his book of the *Visions of Pierce Plouhman*, noted the same in such full and plain words, that men might well deem that they were written after the act was done, were not certain copies yet to be seen with his prophecy to be found therein. There were divers others, too, who foresaw this overthrow ere it came, of the which I speak not now, saving to note the wondrous revelation thereof, which was poured upon the dying eyes of the Lady Bride Plantagenet, as I have already recounted the same.

Nevertheless, all men do well know, that it was not presently, nor for almost twenty years, after Luther's preaching, that the Pope's power and the Monks were overthrown in this realm; for Henry in his youth was well-seen in Divinity, and wrote much against the new doctrines; whereupon the Pontiff in 1524

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taker, in his edition of that most extraordinary composition from a contemporary manuscript, gives the passage somewhat different, though equally full, but he considers it as no other than a happy conjecture. These Visions are ascertained to have been written after, or during, the year 1362, and though they are generally attributed to Robert Langlande, it is thought that the best MSS., as well as some passages in the poem itself, state the Author's name to have been William. It was first printed in 1550. Pierce the Ploughman's Crede, which has been cited in a former part of this volume, is an imitation of the Visions, though by a different hand, and was written after the death of Wiclif in 1384. It was first printed in 1553.

gave unto him the lofty title of Defender of the Faith. But some seven years thereafter, when he first began to desire a new consort, and to question the lawfulness of his marriage with the good Queen Catherine, then might all men see that the storm was hastening on. First fell the great and wise Cardinal Wolsey, then followed the King's divorce, and anon, to the fearful amaze of all who yet owned the Pope's authority, Henry was declared Supreme Head of the Church; rashly, as I then thought, attacking the Vicegerent of Heaven, and setting at nought his holy power derived from St. Peter, through a long line of Pontiffs who had gloriously ruled over the Christian world. They who adhered unto him and the Faith he taught, and denied the civil power of the Parliament to give unto Henry a spiritual sovereignty, then became meet objects of persecution, and divers fell victims thereunto; especially, as I remember me, the three Carthusian Priors of London, Axiholm, and Belleval, with certain others, in the year 1535: the which were full soon followed by the wise and good Doctor John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, and the late High-Chancellor, the very witty and learned Sir Thomas More.

The tempest which we looked for did now soon burst, and descend upon the Religious Houses of the realm, as being the peculiar subjects of the Bishop of Rome: for when the Pope excommunicated Henry, the dissolution of Monasteries was forthwith resolved on, and their general Visitation began by divers Com-

missioners, appointed by the Lord Cromwell, the King's Vicar-genera.. Yet unto such as foresaw not the end of this device, it seemed rather the *support* or *amendment,* than the *abolition,* of Monasteries which was now sought; for the instructions of the said Visitors were little different, from those which have ever been set forth by Bishops or Papal Legates in their wonted Visitations. But the Commissioners, I trow, were also commanded first to go unto the lesser Religious Houses, and exhort the inmates thereof presently to yield them unto the King; upon failure of which, they were to seek occasion for their sudden suppression by enquiring into their misdeeds. Howbeit, at this time only seven Houses resigned; and it was shewn that most of the evil charged upon the Monks, was to be found in the smaller Brotherhoods and Convents only.

So was the work of destruction begun, but in March in the next year, namely, 1536, the King devised a speedier means of proceeding against them; for a Bill was suddenly sent unto the Parliament, that all Monasteries which owned not two hundred pounds in a clear yearly value, should be given unto the King. But this Bill, as Henry thought, stuck too long with the Commons; wherefore he sent for certain of them, and told them that he would have some of their heads, unless it were enacted forthwith, and so it was suddenly done. Commissioners were thereupon sent unto all such Houses, briefly to declare their dissolution, to

make an inventory of their goods, to seize upon their seals and charters, and to dispose of the societies: although, as the aforesaid Bill left the King free to refound those Houses, each one hoped to escape from utter destruction, by gifts or pensions made unto the Vicar-General and his deputies, to buy their favour and secure their own safety; by the which means, many were for a brief space respited or new-founded.

Howbeit this Act, after all, touched not the greater Monasteries, nor the Abbey of Walsingham; yet our House well devised what would succeed, since this provision was like a small broche wherewith men make a little hole, to put in afterwards a larger auger. And even as we expected, so did it soon follow; for the dissolution of the smaller Monasteries having brought on a notable insurrection on their behalf in the Northern Counties, by divers of the commonalty who missed their alms and other charities,—certain of the greater Religious Houses were charged with aiding and abetting the same, and so it was resolved at once to suppress them.

These were some of the public passages of this most disquiet time, but now come I to note mine own particular, and hapless, concern therein. Upon the King's declaration of his Supremacy over the Church, Richard Vowell, our Prior, Edmund Warham, the then Sub-Prior, and twenty Canons, subscribed unto it on Friday, the 18th of September, in the year 1534. But though this was received as the act of all

our House, yet did not the whole Brotherhood sign the same: for Father George Gisborough, of whom I have afore spoken, and divers others denied it; and for mine own part, I was then, by order of the Prior, at Flitcham, a Cell belonging unto our Abbey, some fifteen miles distant. So passed I unquestioned in that matter, but sixteen of my resisting brethren were long and cruelly imprisoned, and five of them were hanged for high treason in 1536. And in their sad fate did I full well deem that I beheld mine own, what time it was determined to rid Walsingham Abbey of it's Canons, and leave the same at the King's pleasure; the which was brought about in this manner.

In July, soon after the Feast of Pentecost, in the thirtieth year of Henry VIII., namely 1538, certain Commissioners came unto our House to make Visitation, the chief thereof being Sir Richard Southwell. They assayed divers devices to effect their end, by separate and secret examinations both of the Brethren and Servitors; but first they so wrought with our Prior, that they made him of a very facile and ready mind to follow their counsel in this matter, and surrender his Monastery unto the King or his assigns; for the which service he did soon after receive a pension of £100 yearly, and, peradventure, doth still enjoy the same. He did then forthwith propound Henry's desire unto us in full Chapter, and read a deed which had been given unto him to sign, declaring the misorder and evil rule of the Brethren of the

Abbey, both unto God and the King, which constrained him to give it up. Furthermore, he counselled us to join him herein, assuring us of pensions or advancement in the Church, for so doing, and shewing us that it was altogether vain to withstand the Sovereign's commandment. The tidings of this guerdon had much weight with divers of my fellows, who were in truth worldly and evil men, unfitted for a monastic life; and, therefore, did they yield unto the Prior's counsel, and subscribed the said deed, for the which they received certain pensions, from forty shillings to nine marks yearly.

Thus was the noted Abbey of Walsingham, with Flitcham Cell, given up unto the King, by a brief writ in Latin, enrolled in the Chancery, and bearing date on Friday, the 4th of August; but thereunto was added a most shameful and dishonest confession in English, and so I was resolved to set mine hand unto neither, let the bribes or the consequences be what they might. The said declaration set forth that we, and others of our *pretensed* religion, had long time used divers papistical ceremonies; such as wearing of scapulars and hoods, black and white garments, with vain dockying and becking, and disguising ourselves after strange fashions, the which belonged not unto Christian living. Moreover, it was affirmed therein, that we had been guilty of much profane fraud touching the miracles and supposed holy reliques of our Shrine, and that we led notorious lewd

and incontinent lives in our Abbey; for the which we yielded up all unto the King's pleasure, and resolved to live in future more according to the examples of the Evangelists and Apostles. Now much of this confession did I utterly deny and scorn: and being closely questioned thereupon by Henry's Visitors, as to wherefore I deemed myself more righteous than my fellows, I boldly answered unto them that I claimed no such holiness, since I knew full well that my sins had been over-many and very foul in the sight of God; yet that I led the best life mine imperfect nature might reach unto, and trusted to amend it by His grace, and that specially had I not to answer for such crimes as the confession declared. For our miracles and the holy reliques, I said that I spake only what I was taught, and did really believe, and knew nothing of fraud therein; but that if my fellows were guilty, they had been so by their own counsel and at their own peril, the which I left unto their own souls and the great Judge of all hearts. Finally I declared, that for the habits and ceremonies which they reviled as superstitious and idolatrous, I had used them only as the meet and reverent rites ordained of the Church; and that as holy Powle said of old, after the way which they called heresy, so worshipped I the God of my fathers.

"Hah! my masters," hereupon exclaimed Sir Richard Southwell unto his fellow-commissioners, for they were then seated in council around a table

in our Refectory,—"how think you, sirs, is not this a most contentious Canon and truculent priest, thus to oppose the King's Majesty?—In my judgement, I trow he deserves little less than to be tied up in a sack and thrown into the Stifkey. What sayest thou unto this, fellow?"

"Briefly," responded I, "that I do neither resist the King's commands, nor might hope any thing from doing so, therefore let him take when he will my poor share of this world's goods in this Monastery; for he who hath given himself up unto a holy life, is pledged unto poverty, and may call nothing his own save his habit and rosary. Yet would I say, let the King beware how he seizes upon the possessions of the Holy Church, lest, like the Eagle in Æsopus, who stole a brand from an altar and carried it unto her eyrie, he do but fire his own house with the sacrilegious spoil.—And for the consequences which you menace unto my free speech and alledged resistance, I fear nothing: they may indeed affright rich and dainty folk, who fare sumptuously and be clothed delicately, and have their chiefest hopes in this world,—but unto me, and such as me, the sack and the river have no terrors; since, I give thanks unto God, I know the way to Heaven to be as short and as sure by water as by land."

Thus plain and fearless was my speech, although it placed me in sudden and no little hazard, for I was forthwith made close prisoner in my study, a dark

narrow cell over the Dormitory, until Henry's pleasure should be known concerning me; and there left with little to support life, and nothing of comfort. In the mean space, our common seal was broken, the Prior and other Brethren were put forth of the Abbey, and it's spoliation completed. All that might be gathered from it for sale, as the lead, the bells, and such like, were carried away, the Church, the Library, the Canons' chambers, and every other place being stripped, and then left to fall into that decay in which it now appeareth; though the Prior's lodgings and offices were yet left standing, for the commodity of him unto whom the King should grant the possession. Then followed the destruction of the rich and noted Shrine of our Lady, as that of Archbishop Becket at Canterbury was also destroyed and despoiled; when, albeit his remains had been venerated by all the pious for so many ages, his bones were burned on the very spot where hosts of pilgrims had so often knelt to do them honour. Then came forth a Proclamation, declaring that the said Archbishop was a traitor and no Saint; that pictures and effigies of him should be destroyed; that feasts unto his honour should be for ever done away; and that even his very name should be blotted out of all books, upon pain of the King's displeasure and imprisonment. The costly plate and precious jewels of our once-wealthy Shrine, were now taken away and reserved for the King; and the furniture and all the

other goods of the Abbey, were either sold, when their price was paid into the Court of Augmentation, then of late set up for that very purpose, or else were wantonly destroyed. In especial our reliques were burned, divers of our images broken to pieces and given unto the flames, and the great and famous Effigy of our Lady carried unto London, and afterwards consumed at Chelsea.

Nevertheless, of these ravages I beheld only the sad ruins and effects, being all the time held a close, though neglected, prisoner in my cell: where I almost deemed that it was the intent of the Visitors to leave me to die of sickness or hunger; for I had not now of a long space breathed the free air of heaven, and not seldom the day would pass, and none come to bring me food, so that I began to sink under that most rigorous confinement. I remember, moreover, how it was at this time told, that the like sickness and death had befallen several Carthusian Monks of London, who were shut up in Newgate prison for resisting the King; whose fate was not thought to be cruelty in the Visitors of their House, but the righteous judgement of God. And hereupon was I exceeding sad, yet possessed I nought which might console me save my books, which were yet left unto me in my narrow cell, and specially the learned Wiclif's New Testament in English, which had been given unto me by the dear departed Lady Bride Plantagenet.—I had already glanced over that most ancient tome, though

rather from reverent attachment unto the memory of the beloved donor, than from any desire to acquaint me with the book itself; but at this time, in the sad and weary leisure of captivity, I set me to read it through with more diligence, to while away the desolate waste of my melancholy hours. And now was come the season of my spiritual deliverance; for, like Saul journeying unto Damask, the light from Heaven suddenly shone about me, and shewed me how vain had been my former life, and much of my present faith. I beheld gradually, yet with great amaze, the wondrous superstition into which our Church had sunken, by praying unto Saints and Angels instead of unto Christ the only Mediator; and I now noted the wide difference betwixt the lives of the holy Evangelists and Apostles, and those led by many of the monks and brethren with whom I had been wont to company. Now could I fervently join in that most christian desire and prayer of the beatified Lady Bride, that all England should have the Rule of Faith in the common speech, that men might be led to read and ponder the same for themselves; and now did I rejoice over the dawning fulfilment of her dying prophecy in the reformation of our corrupt Clergy, and the spread of the Translated Word against all opposition, which shewed it of a truth to be a divine thing, against which no weapon that was turned could prosper. For the English Testaments of late set forth in Flanders, by William Tindal and John Frith, had

spread wondrously through the realm; and albeit Cuthbert Tonstall, the Bishop of London, had seized upon all copies whereon he could lay his hands, and burned them with foul contumely at Powle's Cross, yet was not the incorruptible seed of the Word to be destroyed by fire, but the truth, as in the Apostles' days, grew mightily: and other and larger Translations of the whole Scriptures followed, until at length the realm was made glad by divers English Bibles, printed by the command of the King himself.

I had, until this time, taken little note of these things, because the hour was not come when mine eyes should be opened; for, since the Lady Bride's death, life seemed unto me a dreary waste, wherein there was nought but sorrow and unceasing disappointment. But now, as the truth dawned upon my mind, and I thankfully prayed over the increasing brightness, I felt a holy joy fill my soul in the midst of all my sorrows, like unto that which made Powle and Silas worship and sing praises unto God in their prison at midnight.

And even upon this spiritual liberation, came my temporal freedom; for the King's Visitors did at length sell the site of Walsingham Abbey, with it's churchyard, orchards, and gardens, unto one Thomas Sydney for £90. This was done in November, 1539, whereupon they left our ruined House, albeit I was still immured within my cell; where, indeed, it is like that I should have died, had it not been for a

wondrous and all unlooked-for providence. I have already recounted that when Henry came unto Walsingham, the Abbey was not perfectly edified, and, therefore, certain masons and builders were long employed thereon; the oversight of whom was assigned unto me, because of my former knowledge and practice of their art. The chief of these was one Master Bartholomew Stonehewer, of Norwich, a most skilful and ancient person, whom I had known at Westminster, what time I aided Father Austin of Ely in building Henry Tudor's Chapel there, wherefrom he did still keep me in lively remembrance and favour. It so chanced, that he was engaged by the new possessor of the destroyed Abbey, to build him a fair Manor-house on the site thereof, with the stones of the ruins; and, learning of mine imprisonment, he did at length contrive mine escape in the night, in the habit of one of his own workmen, with much hazard unto himself; spreading abroad the report, that in taking down one of the cells, they had found the remains of my lifeless body.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE CLOSE AND MORAL OF AN OLD MAN'S STORY.

—— Having now my journey done,
Just at the setting of the sun;
Here I have found a chamber fit,
God and good friends be thank'd for it!

HERRICK.

—— No! I would not live again
The morning hours of life;
I would not be again
The slave of hope and fear;
I would not learn again
The wisdom by Experience hardly taught.
To me the past presents
No object for regret;
To me the present gives
All cause for full content.
The future,—it is now the cheerful noon,
And on the sunny-smiling fields I gaze
With eyes alive to joy;
When the dark night descends,
I willingly shall close my weary lids,
Secure to wake again.

SOUTHEY.

I WEEN that full little is now remaining to be said of my poor history, for it skills not here to repeat the straits whereunto I was reduced, when I was thus drifted forth again upon the stormy sea of the wide world, or the loneliness of heart which I felt therein.

The few dear friends whom I had once known or might have claimed, were either long since dispersed or dead; and had all fallen around me, and left me desolate and destitute, like a rock when the tide hath left it dry and bare, or as the Autumn-blast that shaketh the tree and scattereth the leaves thereof, whilst the trunk standeth naked and alone amidst all the tempests of the coming winter. Howbeit, even in my most forlorn estate, was my mind more hopeful and tranquil, than it had been whilst the Holy Scriptures and the pure simplicity of a Christian life were unknown to me; and specially did I draw this consolation from the early decease of my friends, that I had so many ties *less* unto earth, and so many *more* allurements unto Heaven, those supporters being taken from me that I might put my trust in God only.

Yet had Master Stonehewer given unto me somewhat more than liberty, for, knowing mine acquaintance with his own art, he commended me unto one of the same craft for entertainment; and I did once more practise it in lowly and cautious disguise, to baffle the purposes of those who would have sought my life. The payment of my daily toil, mean as it was, provided me with bread; the blessed hope of Christ was in mine heart, and more I sought not: yet did I sometimes sorrow for the unquiet state of the Church of this realm, for the fickle and boisterous rule and the fierce persecutions of Henry, touching the Christian Faith, and for the hapless lot of the many

Brethren expelled from the late dissolved Monasteries who could neither dig nor beg; but for myself I mourned not, since I was but subjected unto the common lot of man,—to labour until I should return unto the ground.

And now, the tale of my life draweth unto a close; the which, they who may haply scan the same in after-years, shall find it to be, as I have afore declared, all inglorious and full of sorrow. That, indeed, it ended not in direful disaster, instead of my present most tranquil retreat from the world, I cannot attribute unto mine own caution or goodness, but chiefest must I laud the wise and merciful governance of God; which led the unsteady steps of my youth, if not into the ways of pleasantness, at least sometimes into the paths of peace, and did ever keep me from wandering into dangerous error. And, moreover, I may thank Him for having raised up unto me the friend and patron of mine old age, the noble Sir Thomas Moyle, for whom this little tome hath been written to record the passages of my former life; and, such as it is found, may he receive it with favour! Here, then, might I well finish mine history and my labours; for it availeth little that I should recount unto *him*, how he first took note of the aged Richard Plantagenet, or how large were his efforts or his bounty to give solace unto the closing days of my pilgrimage. But to the end that his noble charity may never be forgotten, and that others who shall read this my story

may know the fate of my latter days, I will give a brief relation thereof; shunning, as I best may, the very shadow of flattery, although, natheless, it is not easily avoided, when the pensioner recounteth his story unto the very patron who hath snatched him from want and sorrow.

It was, then, I think, about the year 1543, that Sir Thomas Moyle bought the late Sir Christopher Hales' fair Manor of Eastwell in Kent; he being at that time Speaker of the Commons House of Parliament, Chancellor of the Court of Augmentation, in high favour with Henry VIII., and possessed of great wealth by his honourable labours in the laws of this realm. He next determined to build him a stately mansion in the said Manor, and thereupon he reared the noble Palace of Eastwell, carrying down certain masons for the same, with whom were myself and he who entertained me. Albeit my fortunes were now indeed sunken full low, yet, even at this time, did I remember so much of my gentle birth and of the learning of my younger days, as to keep me apart from the baser sort of my fellow-workmen, and still to look upon some notable author at all my moments of leisure; though, as that which I read was full often in the Latin tongue, I was ever fain to hide it from my companions or any who approached, lest it should but provoke blame or derision. The book wherein I read whilst I wrought at Eastwell, was that most choice colloquy of Marcus Tullius Cicero upon Old Age, which I

found to be somewhat of divine solace unto me now that I had reached the same condition of life: and which made me not only resigned and hopeful for the future, but even content with the past, stormy as in truth it had been. And methought his Cato did herein breathe out somewhat almost holy and christian, in that place wherein he wondrously entreateth of his past days, which beginneth *"Quod si quis Deus mihi largiatur,"* which in our own tongue, as I applied it unto myself, standeth thus.—Should it please God to give unto me a grant again to begin my life from my very cradle, and once more to run over the course of my years, yet would not I in any wise accept thereof. Nor would I, having now in a manner finished my race, run it over again from the starting-place unto the goal; for what pleasure hath my life had in it? Nay, rather, what pain had it not? though, were there none, there would questionless have been much weariness and trouble therein. Yet am I not now for bewailing my past life, as many, even wise men, have done; nor do I repent me that I have lived, because God hath led me to live so, that I am assured my days have not been given in vain: so that when I quit this life, I leave it but as an inn, and not as mine established dwelling; the bodies which Nature hath given us, being but as a hostel wherein to lodge for a brief season and not to abide in. Oh! how goodly and glorious, therefore, will that day be, when I shall leave for ever the rabble-rout and defilements of this world behind

me, and go unto God and the fellowship of the world of spirits above!—

It so chanced, then, that in the hot season of Summer, when the workmen were resting from their labours at noontide, I retired me into one of the chambers of the mansion, and was pondering over the almost heavenly philosophy of this divine Roman, and mine own present condition; whereupon I fell into a deep musing, with mine hand pointing unto the words I have recounted, albeit I was all forgetful of that which was around me. On a sudden, the sound of a voice near me recalled my wandering senses, whereupon I started up, but my book was gone, though presently I saw it in the hands of a grave and full-aged man, of tall stature and noble air, richly habited in black, who was reading the passage whereto I had pointed, with a benign and tranquil visage, yet with somewhat of amaze; as if he had been one who knew and felt it for himself, albeit he wondered how it should be understood or chosen by a common workman such as I did appear. When, therefore, he noted that mine attention was fixed upon him, he addressed me with gentle speech, saying that he meant not to disturb my reading or repose, albeit curiosity had led him to look on that which I seemed to have been studying, and that he much marvelled to find it Latin. This led me to relate unto him mine early instruction therein, and other discourse followed, whereby I found the good Sir Thomas Moyle, for it was no other

than that noble Knight himself, who now talked with me,—to be of so generous and charitable a soul, that I disclosed unto him somewhat more of my story; the which, whilst he greatly wondered at, he not only promised should be kept secret, but he did at once assure me of his protection and favour for the remainder of my days, wherein he said I should labour no more. That excellent person, indeed, would fain have received into his own household the aged form of the Last of the Plantagenets, yet did he afterwards consent to make me happy according to mine own desire, by giving me a little spot of ground near his mansion, whereon I might rear me my last retreat from the tempests of the world.

This dwelling, therefore, was edified about 1546, and here, in this fair and solitary Eastwell, have I now lived nearly four years, in full security and free from care. Nor do I lack for either company or converse, for beside that the noble Knight and his gentle consort do often come unto my cottage, to discourse with me upon the passages of former days, I do also sometimes receive their two fair daughters and their stately spouses; the Lady Catherine married unto Sir Thomas Finch, and the Lady Anne unto Sir Thomas Kempe. Nay, farther, when that there is holiday at Eastwell Palace by all the noble family being assembled there, the fair and promising offspring of those Knights and Dames do love to gather them around the aged Fitz-Richard, and court him to tell them the

tales of his own youth: the brave boys asking him to speak of the fights of Bosworth-field, of Stoke, the battles of France and Burgundy, of the royal King Richard, the stout Sir Gilbert De Mountford, and the good and valourous Lord Lovel; whereupon I can well mark how the striplings' eyes fire, their hearts beat, and their feet plant them more firmly at the recital. The fair-haired girls, too, will often ask me of the Duchess of Burgundy, the good Queen Elizabeth and her daughters, and specially of the Lady Bride, over whose memory they have blended their sweet tears with mine. And thus do I continually, as it were, live my life again, without the pain or labour which I felt when I first assayed it; and by thus often recurring unto the scenes thereof, they are ever present with me, beside that I have some few passages of it written: and, moreover, the memory of an old man is ever best for the past, seeing that he regards but little either the present or the future. This, then, hath enabled me to pleasure my noble patron by recording my story, as he hath willed me, so exactly as it is here written; yet, natheless, have I done it with much toil, and many sad thoughts and remembrances, both for myself and the world wherein I have lived.

For, when I do look backward, my life doth sometimes appear nought but sorrow, doubt, and disappointment; and though such, I question not, will often be found in the course of many of full high

estate, whom the ill-judging world deems to be the happiest of men,—yet have I sometimes known moments of sorrow, wherein I have almost sunken under very weariness of spirit, whilst pondering over mine hapless condition and pilgrimage. It was not mine to be borne up by those inspiring hopes which are full often to be found woven into the very fabric of the lives of others; but, with a heart well-attuned unto kind fellowship with all, I have been doomed unto solitude and danger, and sternly, as I have sometimes thought it, cut off from the friendship and love of mankind.

And from that mournful memorable day which saw the sun of Plantagenet set in blood, when I beheld my royal father dying upon the battle-field, sorrow hath ever been familiar unto me, and joy little less than a stranger: for mine was a youth of doubt and peril, the hazards whereof ended not even when it had passed into manhood. For this cause, I ever stood alone in the crowd of those with whom at divers times I consorted, and have never ceased to feel myself as a link severed from the great chain of living men; since but few have mourned with me in my sorrows, and joys have I had none to share with any: and albeit I have suffered much from the cruelty of man, never have I been soothed by the tender cares of woman. Yet, natheless, have I flattered me with the thought, that there was in truth *one* gentle creature, who sometimes beamed upon my darkened path,

who would have been contented to have shared my lot, had God so willed it:—but it was not to be; the unreal vision charmed my senses but for a few brief hours, and then I awoke from the pleasant dream, only again to encounter substantial and lasting sorrow.

Yes! she hath fled!—the Lady Bride hath reached her eternal home, and thus escaped more years of suffering upon earth; though truly she also knew enough of this world's sorrow, ere her gentle spirit was released. It was her's to behold her widowed mother, the consort of the victorious Edward, taught by dire adversity how hollow, false, and worthless, were the gaudy things of time which she had once so fondly courted; and it was her's to feel that the throne and coronal, which made that Queen so envied of all her sex, were no armour of proof to shield her from hazard and oppression. The Lady Bride beheld, too, how the good Elizabeth, although herself a Queen and the mother of a Queen, was left so destitute in her last moments, that not a relique of her greatness remained unto her, and she wanted means to bestow even a parting gift upon her kindred, friends, and servitors; the grasp of Harry Tudor's avarice having despoiled her of all: nor was the daughter of that Queen and sister of the Lady Bride, the good Elizabeth of York, in aught more prosperous.

But unto the dead, and specially unto such as are

happily-parted, the sorrows of this world are as if they had not been, beside that they 'scape from many which fall upon their survivors; and I do ever and anon feel the heavy sum of mine own mischances lessened, when I look backward along the line of hapless and disquiet years since the Lady Bride's death, or upon the rugged and gloomy path which I have travelled, and rejoice to remember that her feet were so early and safely lifted above those thorns and briars. Yet can I now look upon these mischances with much calmness, for, albeit my youth was full restless and fiery under those disappointments, old age is a season of repose; and I trust the falling leaves of almost fourscore Autumns have not counselled me in vain. Yes! the violent flood of my grief even for her is asswaged, and I can now bear to dwell upon her love, and yearly to visit her tomb with a tranquil sorrow, though it encloseth all that ever spake unto me of earthly happiness.

The fierceness of my hate against the oppressor of her House and mine, is also past, though time was when I would have washed away the wrongs of both in the blood of the Tudors; but I have lived long enough to know the wisdom of entrusting the cause of suffering virtue unto the Great Avenger, who sometimes leaveth the evil heart of man, by way of still greater pain, unto the self-destroying sway of it's own foul passions. And I ween it hath been so with the line of Tudor; for did the crown sit securely

upon Henry after the fight of Bosworth, and Richard's most dishonoured sepulture? And when the banner of insurrection was reared within the realm, were peace or justice the supporters of Henry's throne? Moreover, whilst his wasted and famishing country was full sadly learning that his coffers were too capacious ever to overflow, did not the King himself feel, that the hand may hold more than the heart can enjoy; and that the eye of his inquisition, after visiting with fearful glances the most secret matters of private men, might at last be suddenly turned inward to measure the depths of his own misery, and be overwhelmed with the bitterness of it's own repenting tears?

He died, yet not in the fulness of his time, for royalty hath it's canker-worm, as well as the rose. He died in agony and sorrow, and the mighty cost that was lavished upon his burial, did but meanly shew for the affections of his people; which he, who coveted all, failed to obtain. In truth, he sleepeth now under the proud sepulchral pile which himself erected; which shall, perchance, redeem his name with posterity: but full stately though it be, it will yet stand unto after ages, but as the durable record of his unlawful covetousness and his people's oppressions.

But let not a Plantagenet, though fallen, become an uncharitable reporter of the actions of others. Richmond did indeed gain his throne by the sword, but he upheld it by a peaceful policy; and those civil

tumults which had long desolated the land, were healed in his reign, though after a fierce and bloody struggle. The proud Barons, too, who often did alike make head against the Monarch and oppress the people, were subdued, and were terrible no longer. In truth I will say of this King, that he had a full cunning wit to *gain* wealth and power, and a close grasp to *keep* it: and with this praise let the Lancastrian rest.

I have beheld, also, another King Henry, Eighth of his name, the son of the sister of the Lady Bride,—whose merry and lusty youth was disgusted with his father's avarice, yet hath he too resorted to the same rapacity to gratify his desire for pomp and costly shews; which led him to be careless and prodigal alike of his own wealth and that of others. Inheriting his mother's right, his claim unto the Throne of England was two-fold stronger than his father's, and so was he never assailed, during the long period of his power, by any murmurs of disaffection from his people; albeit his inconstant cruelty might well have tempted them to renounce their allegiance. His fiery nature brooked not the slower, yet more certain, means of overthrowing an adversary by the cold-hearted devices of his sire,—but he ever went straight unto his aim by open violence; with which he was at all times prepared to silence aught of clamour or complaint. His oppressed and degraded subjects full often bowed them beneath the

force of his power, whilst the nation had but one voice, which was the King's,—and but one law,—his caprice. The consciences of men, too, were disregarded; and all were required at his bidding to take up or lay aside the doctrines of their Faith, and their most solemn belief for time and eternity, with unquestioning submission, even as they would doff their wonted garments.

Nor, tutored by the memory of his gentle mother's sufferings, did he, whilst bending unto beauty, know how to regard the feelings, or to protect the weakness of woman. Alas! No! for every fair flower attracted him, but he delighted only to pluck and to destroy them. His Queens, indeed, died not broken hearted, or by slow degrees, like the Lady Elizabeth Widvile, for he would rather blast them suddenly,—and, therefore, the couch of the King was too often but a step unto the scaffold.—The pages of his reign, if future chroniclers should be honest, and dare relate what our eyes have seen, will exhibit, perchance, the saddest picture of female suffering in the annals of men;—which, whilst it is a stain on the chivalry of the age that did bring forth such actions, will, in after-time, carry home unto every dwelling in this land, the certain truth that a retired life is the safest and sweetest sphere of a woman's virtues. Henry was a knight and a courtly one, too, who loved tilts and tournaments to display his prowess, and gain the homage of heart and eye; but *whose* wrongs was I

ever known to redress, and *what* emotions of sympathy ever bespake him true unto his vows?

He professed, and, possibly, did love, to study the deep things of Divinity, yet not for the wise and holy purpose of reforming the errors and corruptions of his people, and discovering the truth for himself;—but because the doubts and subtleties of divers doctrines which the schoolmen teach, did form for him a fitting engine for perplexing or destroying the unwary. Thus ruled he, and was obeyed;—he exacted, and men yielded unto his oppressions; until he did at length desire to spread his supremacy and sway, and to reign alike over the Church and State, and command his subjects even in those things, which embraced not only time but reached unto eternity: yet did this lordly ruler of men's minds and consciences live the very slave of his own passions, and died undetermined in his own Faith! Under the rule of these Sovereigns of the Tudor race, have two generations of men passed away from the earth; and, unto such as I am, a weary sojourner, what mighty changes hath not Time wrought in that space, over the thoughts and manners of my fellows! And herein he who, like me, hath had to struggle with the buffetings of Fortune, may well be allowed to note them, and full often to indulge him in mournful thoughts upon the past, rather than in any goodly prospects for the future:—yet would I shun aught of a repining or embittered spirit. For, albeit I have seen

and known much of sorrow and inaction—yet must I ever confess that all my fellow-men have indeed not been thus sad and indolent, but advancing unto high and great perfection: and, amidst all the toils and difficulties, the wrestlings wherein many single beings have agonised, and sometimes even perished,—the eyes of Eternal Wisdom have seemed still to look down and govern them all; whilst I am assured that the happiness and amendment of my race, is slowly, yet assuredly, advancing, as the sweet and early flowers which come before the Spring, look out from amidst the ice and snows of the Winter.—By much and deep meditation I have learned, also, that the high hopes and noble end of man, cannot be brought about without the aid of adversity; and that trials are sent unto him in mercy, not to sink him in ruin and despondency, but to bring into action the heaven-born powers of his nature; whilst the darkness of affliction is as meet to call forth the excellence of his immaterial spirit, as is the mantle of night unto the skies, to display the bright and beautiful stars of the firmament.

I will gather, then, from mine own remembrance of the revolutions which I have witnessed, and from the many occurrences of great import which be embraced within mine own little span of life,—food for much joyous hope and reflection. A new earth, as it were, hath in that time arisen from the bosom of the ocean; and they who are aweary of the changes of this land, may find another across the Western main,

where full pleasant shades shall gladden their fainting spirits, and where they may look upon Nature in all the dewy freshness of her first birth.—Already, too, hath our own land felt the benefit thereof, in the interchange with those fair and fruitful countries; and her sons have launched upon the waves to combat with the elements, and bring back with every wind and tide the product of that untried world. I trow that it would much content and gladden me, to behold more of those mighty and unknown lands [illegible] unto light by the brave Columbus of Genoa, the [illegible]rs of Portingale, or our own most daring shipmen [illegible]hy do I speak of a wider discovery of *this* w[illegible]n my feet are fast wending unto the land of s[illegible] and ever, as I travel on, doth not each new turning of the way bring it more near and plain unto my view? Mine eyes are waxing dim, and my trembling hand is even now giving up it's hold of the pen which hath inscribed this, and of the staff which sustaineth me.

Nevertheless, these latter days of my course have their own joys, being full of cheerful resignation and calm gladness for the *present* hour, and of humble hope, without fear, for the *last*; for, from the spot where living mine aged limbs are wont to repose them, I look forward with much tranquillity unto the village Church, wherein they will shortly be laid at rest for ever. I do sometimes also look out unto the world with joyful hope, for methinks I behold, in the accession of the young Edward unto the throne of

these realms, the establishment of a purer Faith and a holier Church therein, and the star of her prosperity rising through the parting clouds of her darkness. Over this do I rejoice greatly, and albeit, I well ween that I shall never behold it, seeing that mine hour is near at hand,—yet is my spirit glad even at the distant prospect, and is already prepared to depart in peace.

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LONDON:
Printed by Annie Maurice, Fenchurch street.

00088932

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 January, 2016